

# Desert



## COMING IN DESERT FOR 1985 AND BEYOND — A PREVIEW

Many of our readers have asked what subjects we will be covering in upcoming issues. Here is a partial list of them.

DESERT visits the ARIZONA NORTHERN MINE, Dick Wick Hall's Glory Hole

SWANSEA, Ghost Town of the Buckskin Mountains

Recreation Unlimited: California's Owens Valley

Colorado River Subjects: Camping along and on the River, Lake Havasu City, Yuma, Glen Canyon, Steamboating along the Colorado, Gold is Where you find it, Boulder Dam's 50th Birthday

Ghost Towns: San Bernardino County — Ludlow, Providence  
Riverside County — Gold Park, "New" Dale, Eagle Mountain  
Inyo County — Cerro Gordo, Coso County  
Arizona — Silver King, Winchester, Humboldt, The Bradshaws  
Utah — Silver Reef, Irontown  
Nevada — Rhyolite, The Yellow Pine Mining District, Pioche  
New Mexico, Colorado, Montana, Idaho, and the Mother Lode in Process

Creatures and Critters: Hummingbirds  
The Desert Tortoise  
Trap Door Spiders  
Snakes Alive

Lost Mines and Buried Treasure Stories: The Lost Rhodes Mines  
Quartz Crystal Hill Lost Mine  
The Silenta Senora Mine  
The Lost Horse Mine Hoard

Exploring Ghost Railroads of the West: The Virginia & Truckee Railroad  
Carson and Colorado Railroad  
The Yellow Pine Railroad  
Pioche and Bullionville  
Arizona and Swanssea

Desert Personalities, explorers, and pioneers: Wellwood Murray  
Alfred Doten  
Jacob Hamlin  
William H. Prescott

Of Plants, Trees, and Growing Things: The Mesquite Tree  
Palo Verde Trees  
Fishhook Cactus  
Cholla  
The Joshua Tree

Of Parks and Places : Anza Borrego  
Lehman Caves  
Zion National Park  
Coral Pink Sand Dunes  
Laws Museum  
Mesa Verde  
Petrified Forest  
Valley of Fire

Of Mines, Miners, and Rocks: Garnets  
Copper Mining in Arizona  
Apache Tears  
Azurite  
Gold Mining on the Mother Lode



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# WONDERS OF DEATH VALLEY

by Chuck Gebhardt



Along the scale of human emotions, anticipation can be the most descriptive characteristic of one's feeling when planning a visit to Death Valley National Monument. A visitor may travel up and down the same roads from season to season through the Monument, yet view different landscape each and every time. That changing scene may be brought about by the time of day, the cloud cover, or even the amount of rainfall during several months preceding the planned visit.

For example, an unstable cliff face of sandstone may have finally given way to the elements and left exposed a new facade of colors never thought to exist behind the otherwise bland walls. A new wash might have been formed due to the previous summer's rain, or a once familiar wash will have appeared to alter direction or size. These changes are in a continuum as Nature rules over the weather, geology, and the plants. The extremes of the Valley's climate contribute greatly to these changes; some subtle and some obvious. Assisting Nature in the near constant alteration of the Death Valley scene is Man. Man's influence can be detected in one instance by a slight extension of the back country trails. More commonly, in the litter that is randomly discarded at popular sites and the more sacred hidden canyons.

Knowledge of these changes, whether man-made or natural, is of little consequence to the visitor unless they can be experienced first hand. Escaping the blacktop world should be the goal of every visitor. Regardless of your age, sex or size, take advantage of the many opportunities to accompany a Park Naturalist on a brief exploration of an historical site, a natural phenomena, or a colorful panorama. Then, and only then, you will witness—

....the first rays of the morning sun as they wash the western side of the Panamint Mountains with strong tones of pink and red. You are standing ankle deep in salt and mud staring out over the Borax Haystacks. The many pools of brackish water clearly reflect these historic mounds of mud, once piles of borax scraped together by Chinese laborers for \$1.25 a day.

Beneath your feet, the unseen Salt Creek quietly flows underground for another 30 miles south. The absence of plant and animal life is unnoticed as you absorb the changing character of the mountains intensified by the sun's rising.

....the salt pinnacles at the Devil's Golf Course as they begin to glisten and sparkle like a field of grotesquely-shaped diamonds. Silence is gently nudged by the sunrise symphony of the salt crystals - faintly at first light - but clearer and more definitive as the sun's gradual rising sends warmer rays for the crystals to absorb. As you bend down to listen more intensely, a flash of color suddenly strikes your eyes. There, a few feet to your right, is a sparkling salt cone of almost perfect dimensions. Here amid the jagged rubble of salt and mud pinnacles lies a hollow and delicate dome of salt crystals some eight inches high. Accumulations of salt in the mud, blistered by rising water, crystallize to form domes or cones as moisture evaporates.

....a rainbow of color dancing across the Salt Creek Hills as the sun reflects its beauty off the surface of the moving waters of Salt Creek. Migratory waterfowl noisily escape the surface of the great pools at the sound of your footsteps. A faint, narrow trail through the pickleweed can lead you to a cliff's edge and in sight of the only below-sea-level waterfall in the United States. South and downstream, pupfish swim rapidly by the wooden boardwalk exchanging glances with curious visitors. The inch-long, Ice Age fish are an endangered species, and the boardwalk confines foot traffic to prevent cutting tributary streams in the main creek.

....the prominent spike of Manly Beacon rising above a still-darkened Badlands much like a golden finger pointing up at the softly colored morning clouds, now dressed in pastel shades. Below Zabriskie Point, a coyote is seen loping through the shadows of the cuts and washes of the Badlands. To the south of Manly Beacon, the foothills of the Black

Mountains appear like marble ice-cream as the sky lightens. The east side of Red Cathedral has justified its naming as the mountain walls turn a brilliant red and its sculptured surface accented by the shadows.

....the desolation, replaced with beauty, as the sand dunes spread their shadows across Mesquite Flat, the origin of the dune material. Watching closer, you see the contour of the dunes appear to alter and exaggerate with each five degree rise of the sun. Walking through the neighboring field of arrowweed shocks, you notice the lengthy shadows cast by the shocks creep towards the dunes. The east side of the arrowweed is now becoming drenched in a pink light. At your feet, the changing terrain continues to offer surprises to the unwary. The solid and smooth looking surface suddenly breaks like a pie crest thrusting your foot into the soft sand underneath. Further on, the dried, sunbaked surface crackles underfoot with the sound of breaking china.

Inevitably, the morning must move on to be replaced by the harsh light of midday. At that time of day, there is little of real beauty except for remote canyons and mountain retreats where such timeless beauty is enjoyed by the dedicated lovers of Death Valley. This can be the time to enjoy the indoor wonders of Death Valley. The Borax Museum, with its fantastic mineral and gem collections, is indoors at Furnace Creek Ranch. Taste the history of the area by a visit outside behind this Museum. A variety of machinery and vehicles from the mining days past will bring you in touch with yesterday.

One-half mile north of Furnace Creek Ranch is the Death Valley Museum and the National Park Service Headquarters. A slow tour of the displays in the museum can provide a comprehensive view of the basic historical, geological, and natural phenomena for which Death Valley is famous. See the formation of the lakes, the making of the salt pan, the growth of salt crystals, and

the abundance of wild things that live and survive in this less than hospitable environment. Stay a bit and take in an interpretive talk or two - hear about Death Valley's weather, animals, plants, or how the Shoshone Indians made baskets and prepared their food.

As midday gives in to late afternoon, one can seek the wonders of colors in the eastern Valley bejeweled by the red light of the waning sun. Stand at Artist's Palette and gaze out over the multi-colored hills which look much like the crash site of a rainbow. Walk out onto the hills and touch the colors. Wonder about the miracle of chemistry that transforms trace minerals into a veritable kaleidoscope with the help of heat and moisture. Leave here and venture up Golden Canyon to the base of Red Cathedral. The western face of that towering structure is now a fire red lighting up the boulders strewn at its feet. Investigate the many side canyons and washes to discover golden, uplifted land that seems to defy the rules of Nature.

The brightness of day is soon to be at an end. Quickly, now, position yourself about one mile up Grotto Canyon road for the finale. Four hundred feet below you to the north stretches the sand dunes and all of Mesquite Flat. At this opposite end of the day, the dunes again appear to be altering their shape and direction as the sun recedes. A weird shadow is beginning to form along the eastern slip face of the largest dune. Watch intently as the shadow reaches its height of fantasy—an outline of Pinocchio with the unmistakable nose!

Nature's greatest gift to Death Valley must be seen in the briefest of periods during March and April. Time of day and sun's position is of less, importance when flower-watching. The various elements of weather, combined in the proper mix at the proper seasonal time, can result in a prolific display of blooms through the Valley. Commonly, the alluvial fans spreading out onto the Valley floor turn into entire slopes of bright yellow. The Desert Gold, Evening Primrose, and Goldpoppy contribute to this coloring. Along-

side the roadways can be found purple Phacelia and Purplemat, and the odd structures of the Trumpet Plant with its swollen stems. On occasion, one may sight the only orange-colored plant in Death Valley - the Globemallow.

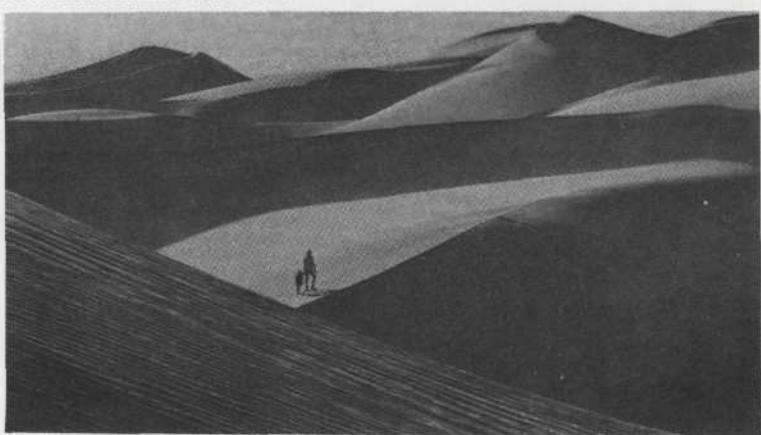
A five-mile walk over and through what I call "Kit Fox Canyon" can be a botanist's delight in a good year. The rocky stretch out to an old historic road is littered with blooming Beavertail cactus whose flowers range from pink to deep magenta. Sharp eyes may pick out a bloom or two on the Golden Cholla - a waxy-looking, pale green flower which blends well with the plant color. Underfoot at all times is the miniature Desert Star, a mini-Sunflower about the size of Lincoln's head on a Lincoln head penny.

Dropping down into the first wash of this canyon, a small, white flower can be seen ahead virtually floating on air. This is the flower of the Tobaccoweed known as Gravel Ghost which perches atop a slim tall stem of some 18-20 inches in height. On a slight slope of the canyon wall, a patch of bright green topped with an off-white flower can be glimpsed. Reaching the plant, one may be disappointed by the closed petals which prevent viewing its internal beauty. By gently blowing into the flower, a momentary opening is created through which startled eyes may gaze at the pinkish inner petals and their tiny bases of crimson red. This is the Desert Fivespot, one of the most beautiful flowering plants of Death Valley and, in harsh years, one of the most difficult to find.

These are but a few of the wonders of Death Valley. There is much more here to fill every hour of today while tomorrow stands by awaiting your presence .....the origin of the Greenwater petroglyphs, the mystery of the moving rocks of Racetrack Valley, and the hidden identity of those beneath the many, unmarked gravesites....these are yet to be explored. Rise early to follow the sun; see, touch, smell, and hear everything within your range, and Death Valley will be yours forever.



A creosote bush witnesses the dawn, with the moon setting, over the dunes at Death Valley National Monument in California.



Light and shade contrast in the Mesquite flat dunes of Death Valley National Monument in California.



# IN AND AROUND UTAH'S DIXIE

by P. Richards & D. Grantham

In the Southwest part of Utah lies an area known as Dixie. The name was coined by early settlers who found the climate and growing conditions similar to that of the area of the confederacy known as Dixie.

The climate is mostly dry. In a good year the area will receive ten inches of rainfall although the average is considerably less. Though hot, but not unbearable in the summer, Utah's Dixie is known for its mild winters. The abundant sunshine and long growing season (which once enabled the Mormon settlers to grow cotton) today make the area a very desirable place to live or vacation.

Dixie's first settlement was located at (Fort) Harmony in 1852 by Mormon missionaries and colonists. Among those early colonists was John D. Lee perhaps better known as the operator of Lee's Ferry on the Colorado River in Arizona. Harmony was developed into an agricultural community although lack of water limited its success. The site today is not recognizable although identified by a sign.



Horse drawn wagon in Santa Clara

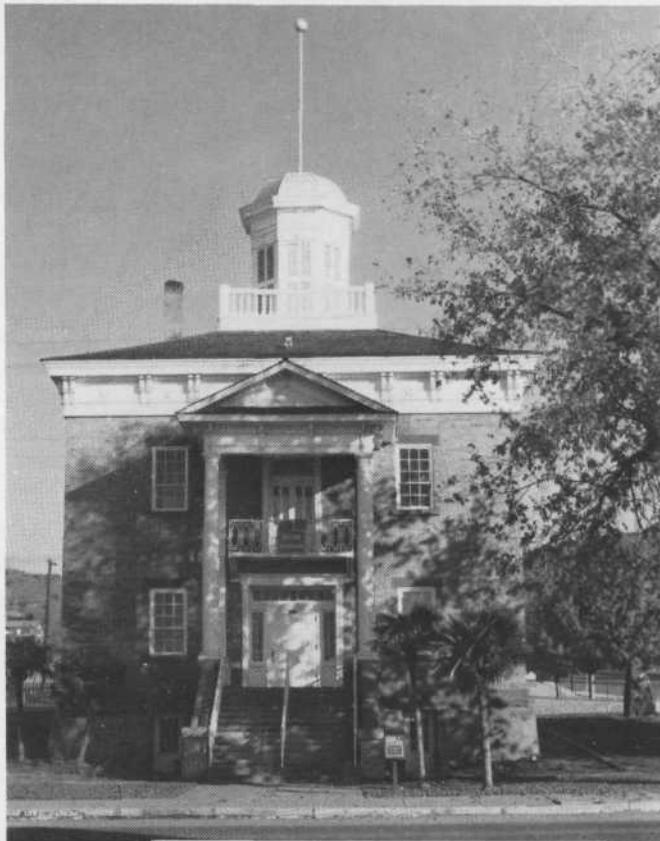
Part of the duties of the missionaries was the civilizing of the Indian tribes of the area. To accomplish this, Jacob Hamblin and several other missionaries established a small settlement on the banks of the Santa Clara River--called Fort Clara--then Tonaquint Station--and presently Santa Clara.

The time was December 1854. From this settlement the saints spread out and numerous small communities were formed--Pine Valley, Bloomington, Grafton, Toqueville, to name a few. Many of these communities retain their individual character today.

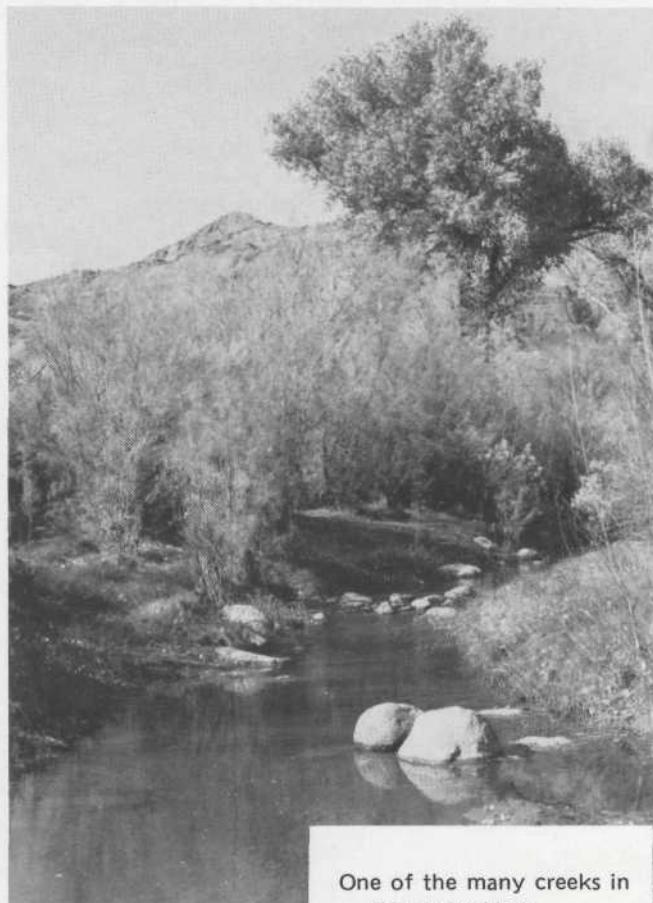
A visit to Dixie should start at St. George, the present county seat. For the historian, a visit to the Museum of the Daughters of Utah Pioneers is a must. Located just behind the Chamber of Commerce, this museum has numerous displays of artifacts and relics of the pioneer days. Admission is free and there is always someone there to explain the exhibits, answer questions, and tell a story or two about the area.

Across the parking lot is the Chamber of Commerce. Here one may obtain information and literature about the area, where to go, what to see, etc. The building they occupy is an exhibit in itself. For the photographer, the building takes a good photo. It is the former County Courthouse built in the 1870's.

Perhaps the best way to superficially explore Dixie is by automobile. While in St. George, be sure to visit the summer home of Brigham Young with its period furnishings. The most predominant building in the city is the Mormon Temple, which rises from the valley floor as a bright white jewel. Completed in 1877, this was the first Mormon Temple completed in Utah. There is a visitor center and the grounds are open to non-Mormons.



Former Washington County Courthouse  
Now the Chamber of Commerce



One of the many creeks in  
Southern Utah



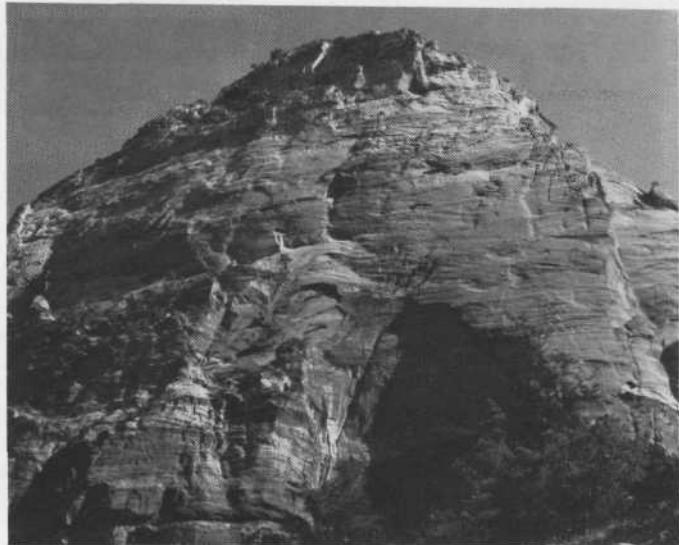
The Mormon Temple in St. George



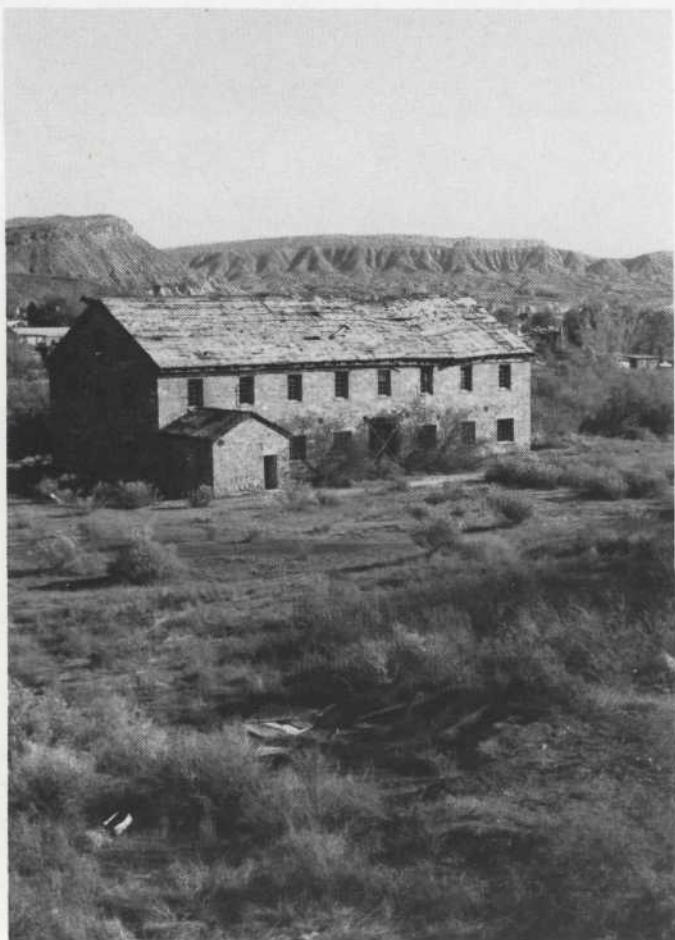
Snow Canyon from on top of the Rim



Brigham Young's Summer Home



One of the many Sandstone Formations in Dixie



Pioneer Cotton Mill Building

To the immediate east of St. George is the town of Washington. Located at the western edge of this community is the remains of the Pioneer Cotton Mills. As early as 1851, cotton was raised in Northern Utah. In 1855, it was cultivated on a small scale at Santa Clara, some 9 miles west. The planting of cotton was in response to orders from Brigham Young who wished his colonists and colonies to be self-sufficient.

The nearby communities has 140 acres under cultivation and the resulting product was said to "be equal in every way to that grown in Tennessee." The first extensive manufacture of cotton cloth was begun in 1865 when a cooperative cotton factory was established in Washington. (see picture) Machinery was freighted from the Missouri River, more than 1,300 miles away. Shortly after the opening of the factory, equipment to manufacture woolen cloth was also acquired and installed. Large flocks of sheep were raised locally to supply the mill.

The cotton industry flourished for a time, partly due to Civil War interference with planters in the south. Part of the raw product went to California and some was freighted to New York where it sold as high as \$1.90 per pound. After the Civil War, the cotton industry revived in the south and the industry in Utah was abandoned.



Roadside creek in Southern Utah

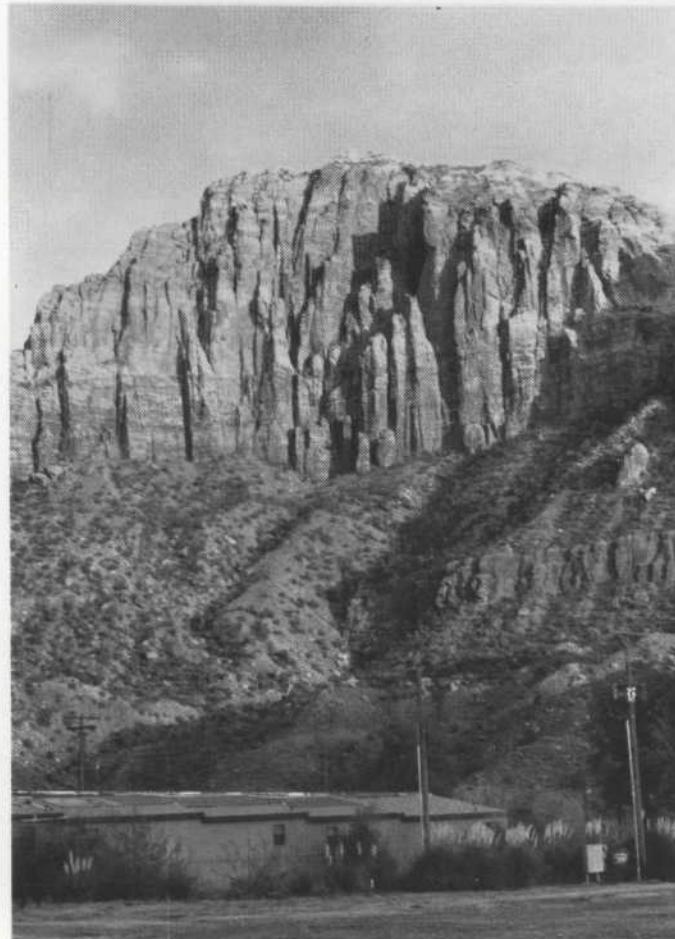


Jacob Hamblin's home at Santa Clara

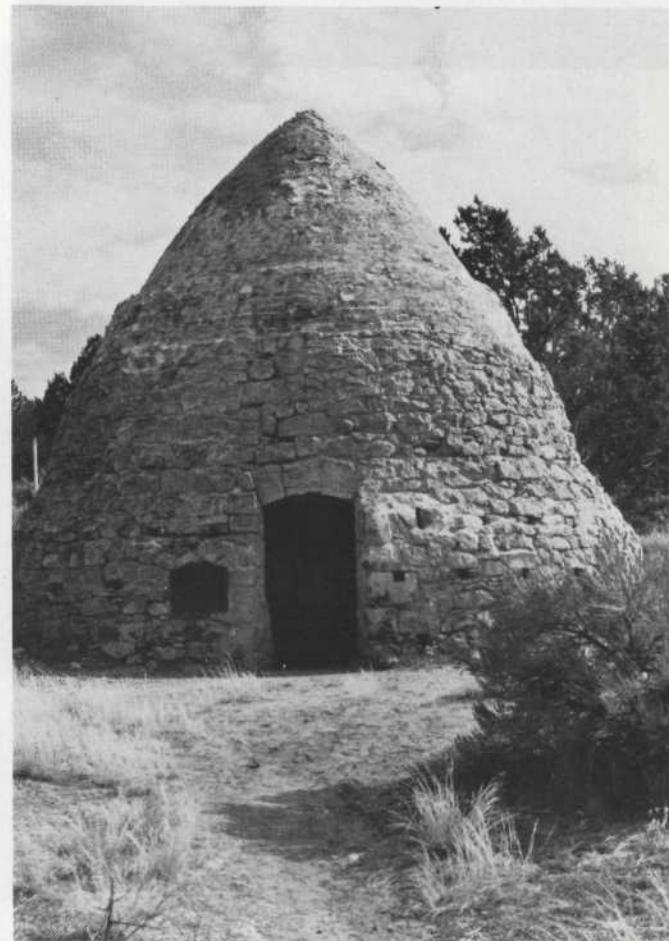
Traveling west from St. George to Santa Clara, one may visit the Jacob Hamblin house. Built in 1862, the house doubled as living quarters and a place of retreat in case of Indian attack. Tours are conducted through the house and admission is free.

Just North of St. George is Snow Canyon State Park, an area of intricately sculptured, beautifully colored sandstone cliffs, curious volcanic formations, Indian rock art, and much more. In the park are picnic tables, drinking water, and a campground. Near the north end of Snow Canyon, the road passes between 2 (of 3) imposing volcanic cinder cones known as the Diamond Valley Volcanoes.

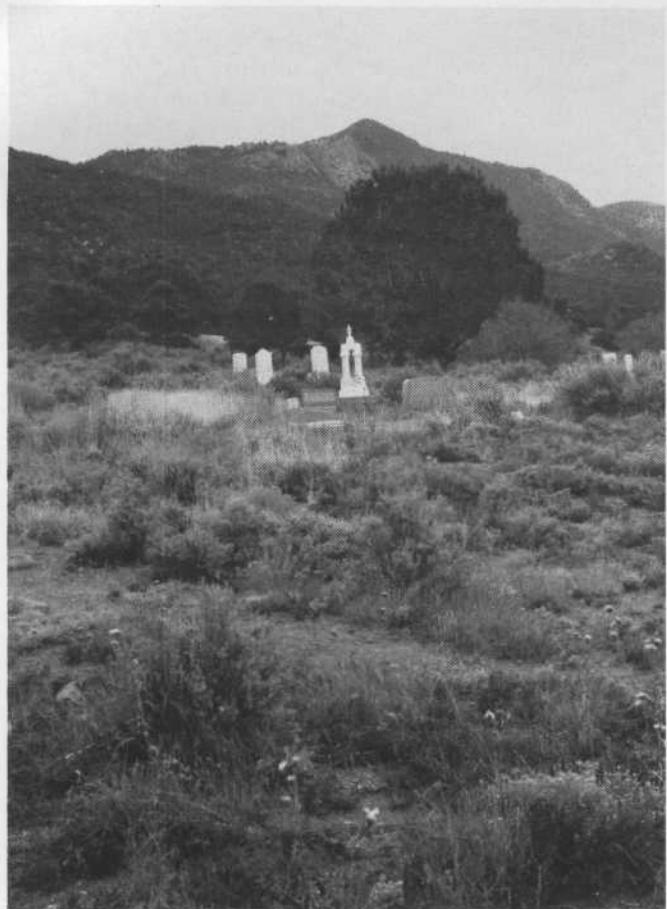
Again heading north, we pass the Hot Springs at Veyo and head up to Central. Here we turn east some 7 miles to Pine Valley. At an altitude of 6,600 feet, the valley became a place of retreat from the summer



Cliffs behind Springdale, Utah



Beehive Kiln at an old Mining Town



Cemetery, Pine Valley



Pine Valley Chapel



Many abandoned homes can be found around the outlying area

heat of the Virgin Valley. Pine Valley's wooden chapel is one of Utah's oldest church buildings in continuous use, having been built in 1868 by Ebenezer Bryce, a former shipwright and the person for whom Bryce Canyon was named. Nearby is Pine Valley Lake, a fishing and camping locale. For the adventuresome, a dirt road leads north to the ghost town of Pinto, but we do not recommend this route unless you enjoy the challenge. There are easier ways to both Pinto's and Old Irontown.

Returning to Central, we again proceed north about 6 miles to the turnoff (west) to Mountain Meadows. This was a well known stopping place on the old Spanish and California trails from the 1820's to the 1850's. It is also known as the site of a massacre in 1857. The area is also rumored to be the location of a very rich "lost" ledge of silver ore, appearing very dark or black in color, and located where ore would not expect it to be.

# DESERT VISITS WHITEWATER

By D. W. Grantham

Would you believe that there exists an area where wild grape vines grow, trout may be caught, one can picnic under the shade of many trees, and frolic in a creek of cold, clear water, all within a few minutes drive of Palm Springs, California??

Yes, there is such a place. And it is a site frequently visited by many people, all seeking recreation in a variety of forms. The name of the area is Whitewater. To most travellers, Whitewater is but an offramp of Interstate 10 on the way to or from Arizona or the southern part of the Coachella Valley. But to those of us who know, Whitewater is an area of unique attractions.

Most of the visitors to the Coachella Valley visit the standard destinations: The Palm Springs Tramway, the golf courses, Living Desert Reserve, date gardens, and such. But few have the opportunity to visit Whitewater. The opportunities for recreation are strictly outdoor.

There is a brook, several fishing pools, outdoor grills, a shaded picnic area, fish hatchery, and a store with groceries, soft drinks, and pole rentals. The pools contain fully stocked schools of trout with students eager to "drop out" at the wiggle of a worm.

Whitewater Trout Ranch is

located a few miles northwest of Palm Springs. Take Interstate 10 to the Whitewater offramp, then drive north about five miles on Whitewater Canyon Road. There is a road leading to Whitewater from Highway 111, but this is poorly marked. Once there, you will find an adequate parking area and lots of shade. The ranch is open the year around every day except Monday. The hours vary. Use of the picnic area is reserved for paying guests. One of the best things about Whitewater Canyon in the summer is that it's at least 10 degrees cooler there than in the valley.

Would you rather be a big fish in a little pond or a little fish in a big pond?? When referring to the Whitewater Trout Ranch, it makes no difference. In either case, you'd have to await your turn at the worm, so to speak. The pond population is so dense at times that fishermen, in baiting their hooks, turn their backs to avoid the ever watchful eyes of the fish. It is not sporting to catch a fish in mid-air.

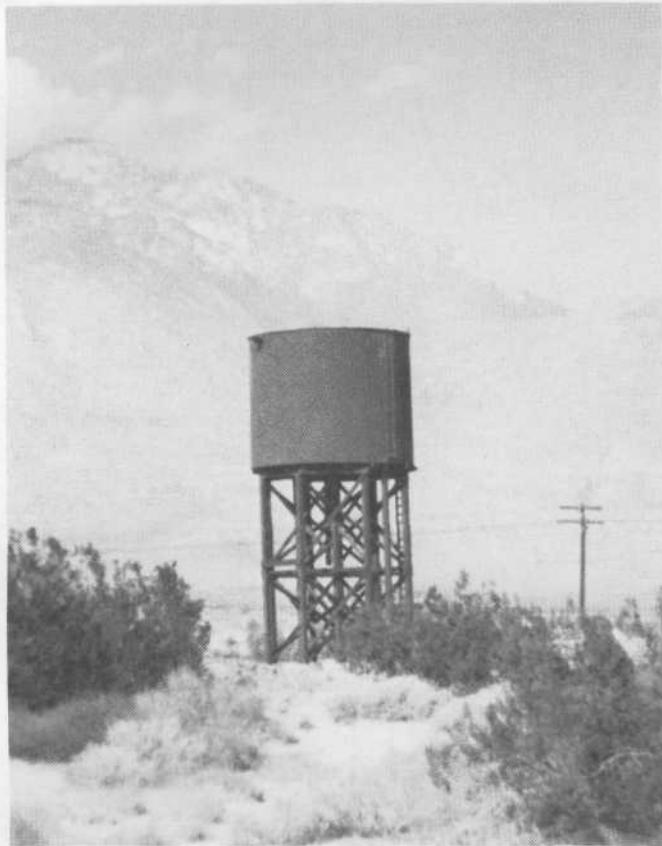
No license is required and you may cook and feast on your fish at the picnic grounds or take them home. Fresh caught trout are also available for purchase, without having to catch them.

The Whitewater trout ranch produces about 800,000 trout per year. Their commercial activity includes the supplying of fish to many other trout farms in Southern California. While enjoying the recreational area, we suggest you stroll up to the "working area" north of the parking lot—it will prove interesting.

Here, you will see the rearing facilities with trout from the kindergarten stage up through the adult stage. There



A group of kids at play in Whitewater Creek.  
From left, Edward, Donna, and Tina.



A Water tank along the railroad



Wild grapes growing along the road.

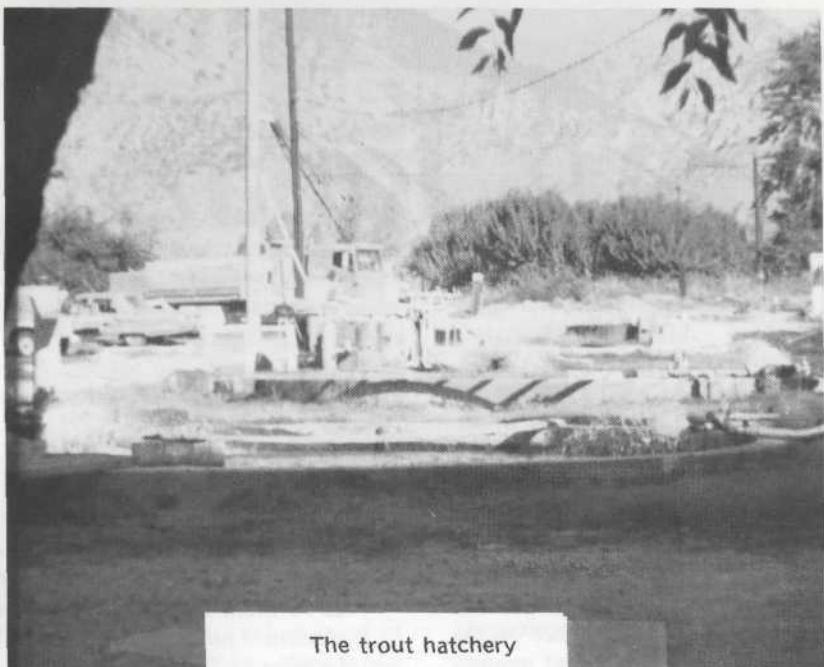


Looking toward the town of Whitewater

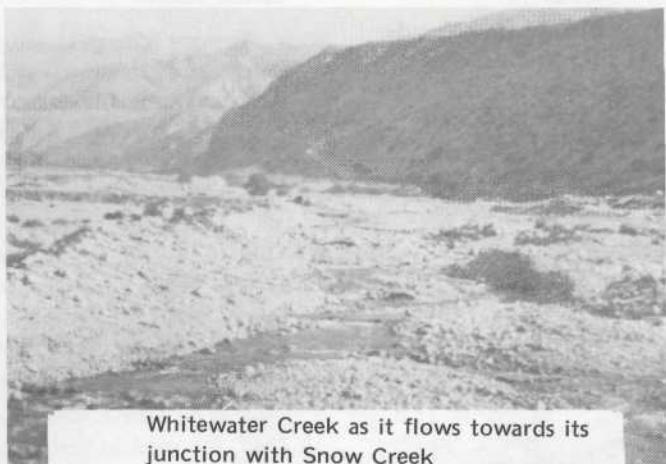
are about 20 ponds containing pure spring water which is changed continuously, 24 hours per day. The water is not reused, it is sent into the Whitewater wash and flows downstream.

It would be a good idea to mark the Whitewater Trout Ranch on your calendar as a place to go when "Old Sol" starts pointing his finger at the Desert region in late spring and during the summer months--you will enjoy the cool shade and quiet outdoor atmosphere. Whether your interest is in patronizing the fishing pools or just picnicing and relaxing, you will find welcome relief from the heat in this happy home of finny friends.

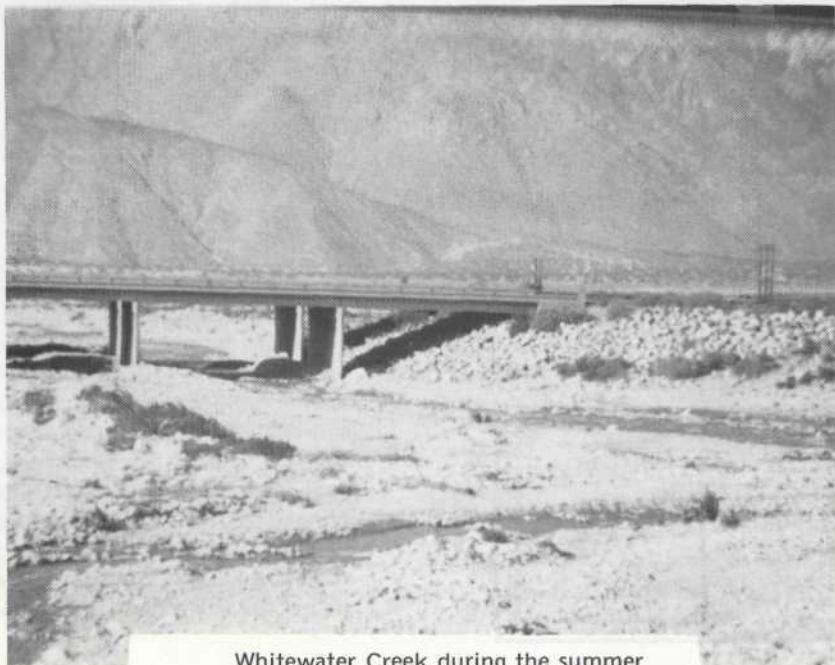
Nearer to the freeway is the community of Whitewater, which consists of a post office, building rock dealer, house, bridge house retreat, and some ruins. In earlier times, Whitewater was a major stopping point on the old highway. It boasted numerous businesses and even several motels. Now it just sits and basks in the sun. At the east side of the townsite is a bridge that crosses over White-



The trout hatchery



Whitewater Creek as it flows towards its junction with Snow Creek



Whitewater Creek during the summer  
(Interstate 10 Bridge in the background)

water Creek. For some good fun and recreation, try visiting the creek. This area is open for visitors and one can sun, play in the water, ride an innertube, or picnic. The water is cold and inviting in the summer heat.

Whitewater is the site of a long vanished Cahuilla Indian village. It got its name from the color of the water--it looks white when running fast, due to the suspended particles of white sand carried by the water. South of the highway is the site of a stage station used by the Bradshaw line and others, which saw service from 1863 to 1877.

If you happen to visit Whitewater on a week day, stop in at the Post Office and buy some stamps. This office is being considered for abandonment and that would be a real loss for the community. The office serves many people in the canyon and surrounding area. Unfortunately, it does not sell enough stamps and that is considered reason enough to abandon it. The post office is the key to the identity of a community and the desert has lost enough of that identity. Help retain the post office at Whitewater. Buy your stamps while passing through.

For the electronic prospector or train buff, Whitewater holds several attractions. Traveling south, Whitewater Canyon Road heads towards Highway 111 and Palm Springs. Just before the junction with highway 111, several railroad tracks must be crossed. Right near here is the former site of the Whitewater Train Station, known variously as West Palm Springs, or just the Palm Springs Station (after the Garnet Station was abandoned). There were numerous buildings at this site and the area should be good for hunting for bottles, etc. For those with metal detectors, it may be tough as there is a ton of junk around the area. Try around the old station site itself. If you find anything, let me know. To the west of the station site is one of the few reamining water tanks along the Southern Pacific Railroad.

Whitewater is just a one hour drive from San Bernardino or Riverside and two hours from Los Angeles. Why not consider a visit to the area. It is a trip I know you will enjoy.

# Mountain o' Topaz

by the Desert Staff

Smoky Mountain, Grassy Trail, Silver City, Gold Hill, Pigeon Hollow Junction, and La Plata are just names on a map --but names that make weekend explorers travel many miles over rough roads in hopes of finding a faded page from the past and seeing an interesting place. Or perhaps discovering a sun purpled bottle or a pretty piece of rock.

Topaz Mountain is such a name and when I read it, I felt an urge to see what the mountain looked like.

Besides, any rock collector will tell you that topaz is very collectable. The only problem was that I was reading a map of Utah and that is quite away from my place on the California desert. But that remoteness served to make the trip all the more interesting.

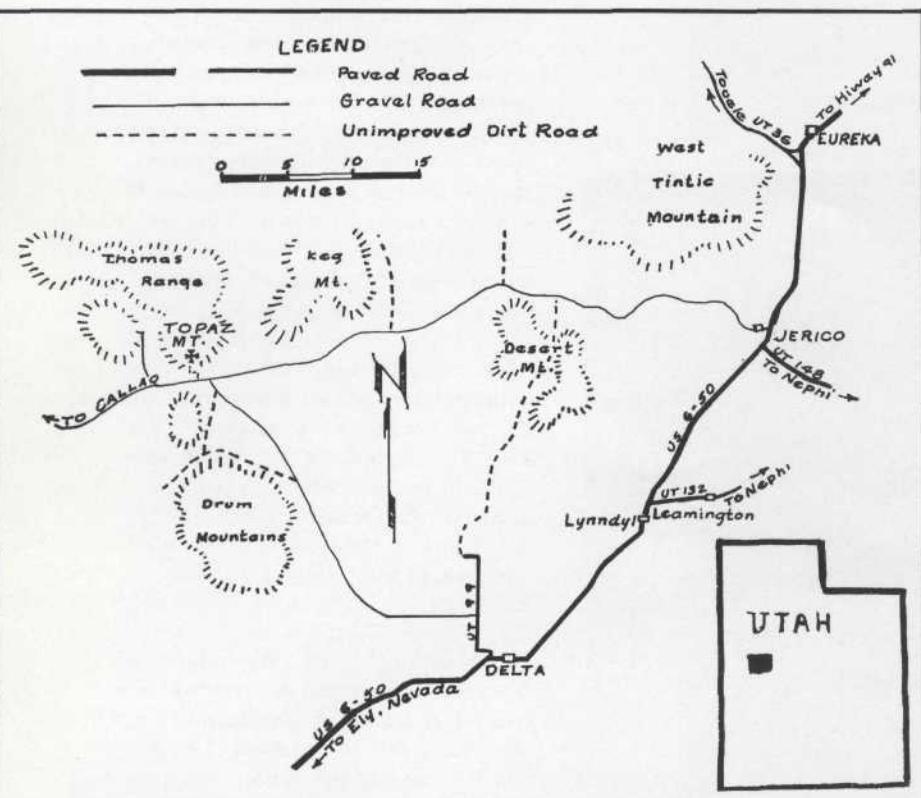
We drove east from Ely, Nevada over Highway 50 towards Delta, Utah. After inquiring in Delta and visiting a cheese factory located there, we were northbound for Topaz Mountain. We drove west

out of Delta and turned north on Utah 99. We then turned left on a gravel road and headed out a total of 39 miles from town. Here we reached a junction, with a sign informing us that Highway 50 was either 39 miles south or 50 miles east at Jerico.

Turning left, west, we proceeded two miles and then turned right (north). The road wound northward over a rough, rocky bench toward a light gray mountain that sprawled lazily under the bright blue Utah sky. A large beryllium deposit is located a few miles to the west of here. Scattered over the entire area are claim markers of assorted shapes and sizes, all marking the location of someone's claim to the underground wealth that lies therein.

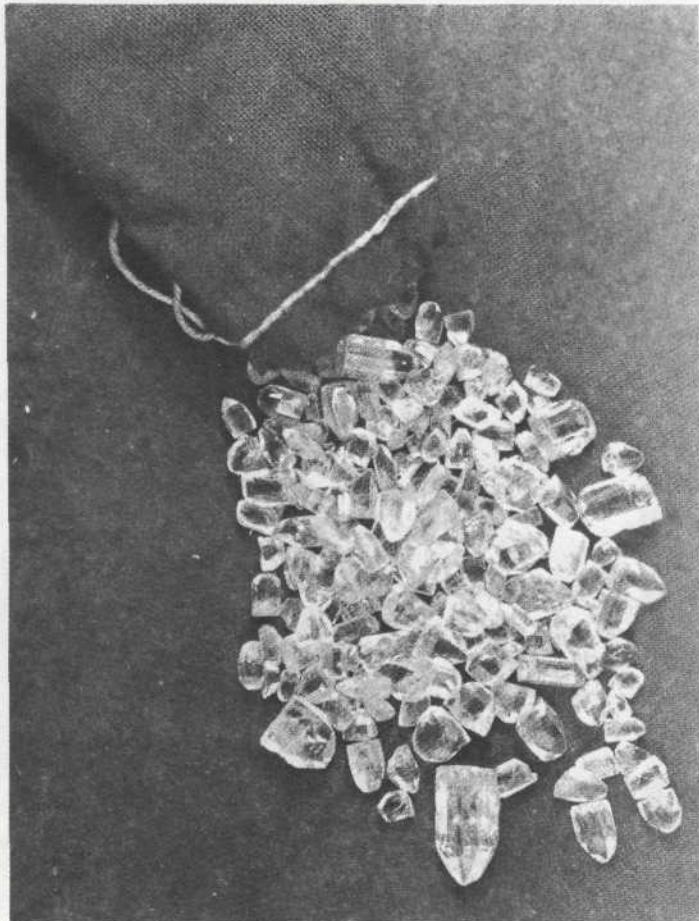
A little over a mile from the main road, the road forked and we turned left. Driving about a mile to the west, we reached a sandy wash that drained the Topaz Mountain area of its infrequent rain. Here, the road turned north, followed the wash for about a mile, and stopped under a group of giant juniper growing at the bottom of a draw. This area had been used as a campground by a good number of visitors.

At this campground was a heavy pipe containing a book in which guests are to register. A statement on the first page of the book said the Mineralogical Society of Utah and the Wasatch Gem and Mineral Society, both of Salt Lake City, hold four claims that cover the campground and a nearby section of Topaz Mountain. People are invited to look for Topaz on their claims and are requested to sign the





Topaz Mountain rises in the middle of a portion of isolated Utah desert



A sampling of Topaz crystals collected at the Utah site

book and enter the time they spent looking for gems.

The hot summer desert sun has bleached out these stones and colorless, clear crystals flash like diamonds in the bright sunlight. With luck, a sharp-eyed person can, in a few hours, pick up several sparkling specimens. Everything that shines is not, however, a gem stone and the collector soon discovers that most of the flashes come from worthless fragments that litter the ground. You will learn, too, that many of the complete crystals are fractured and are of little value to collectors.

But then a lot of the fun is in the hunt. As Shorty Harris once said: "It's the game man, the game", meaning that he may not have made a lot of money from prospecting, but he had a lot of fun playing the game. Even fractured specimens will look attractive in a display case.

Also in the surrounding area are numerous ghost towns and a few mining camps. These sites make good exploring and are not often visited by tourists. On the way to Delta, just a short drive from Ely, Nevada is the Lehman Caves Park. These caves are worth the visit. They are very photogenic.

Both approaches to Topaz Mountain are passable throughout the year and if your vehicle is in good condition, you should have little difficulty. However, be careful of loose gravel and watch for wash-outs after a storm. The area is best avoided in wet weather. Travel on both roads is erratic, so take along extra food and water with you because if your car does break down, it might be sometime before another car comes along.

The winters at Topaz Mountain are freezing cold. Summers are hot. But in the Spring and Fall the weather is really good. So, if you would like to try your hand at gathering topaz crystals and enjoy some scenic country and fresh air, give Topaz Mountain a try.

# THE CHUCKWALLA LIZARD

by B. Crampton

He is the second largest lizard in the United States. His name, CHUCKWALLA, is of Indian origin. The generic name, *Sauromalus Obesos* means "flat lizard." And indeed he is both a "flat" lizard and a "fat" lizard.

The skin is so loose it hangs in folds over his entire body, front and back. When alarmed at a noise or frightened by an enemy, this flat body enables him to squeeze into the narrowest of crevices in the rocks, and because of the loose elastic skin, he can inflate his body so it is virtually impossible to pull him out. This inflation can be 50 to 60 percent greater than his normal size.

A 16 inch long male can either deflate his body to three-fourths of an inch in thickness or inflate his body to three inches thickness, as a protection against his enemies. If a Chuckwalla is undecided as to whether danger is near, he usually sits high on his rock, body inflated and very slowly looks over the surrounding terrain. His scales are small, smooth and closely set.

His habitat is in the rocky areas of the lower desert regions of Southern Utah, Southern Nevada, Southern California, and the lower part of Arizona. The species is more numerous in Arizona. His body requires a daily temperature of from 80 to 120 degrees, so his habitat is somewhat limited.

Being a cold-blooded animal, Chuckwalls' activities are completely dependent on temperature; he is unable to move around after temperatures fall below a certain point. In the fall of the year, when the daytime temperature begins to drop, the Chuckwalla is seldom seen. He will move slower and slower, until finally retreating under the rocks or in a hole in the ground for his winter hibernation.

The Chuckwalla is the last of all the lizards to emerge from his winter hibernation into the awakening of Spring. Nature must have intended this, for, as almost all other lizards can live on insects, the Chuckwalla is a complete vegetarian and must wait until the buds and flowers of the



A vegetarian the Chuckwalla dines on leaves and berries



Despite his fierce appearance he is docile and shy

desert come into bloom. He eats prickly pear, leaves of the creosote bush and encelia bush, and blossoms of all colors, although its favorite food seems to be anything with a yellow color.

A good part of every day is spent lying on the rocks, sunning and napping. The territory of a male Chuckwalla includes at least one good-sized rock, at least four or five feet high, and six to eight feet in width. This territory is about 20 feet square. He will allow very young Chuckwallas in his territory, most females, but never another mature male. Early morning and late afternoon seem to be the time for eating, which is a slow, contented process. The nights are spent under the rocks, sleeping.

With the exception of the Gila Monster, the Chuckwalla is our second largest Iguanid lizard, with a full grown male usually growing to about 18 inches, including the long rounded tail, which is generally equal in length

to the body. Their color is a brownish gray, or lightish gray. As a male grows older, his gray color turns to a black and he will have yellow and orange spotty dots on his back and stomach. These dots will not be too noticeable when he is cold or frightened, but warm, contented, and lying on a rock, he presents a very beautiful coloring.

Their chief weapon of defense is their fat, blunt tail, which, when hurled in an enemy's direction, will cause the enemy to think twice before attacking again. Their teeth are in a single row around the edges of their jaw, and they use them when the occasion arises. They are sharp and the bite from a Chuckwalla feels like many tiny pin pricks. Their last means of defense, but the method used most often, is running into a crevice and inflating their bodies to full expansion—making themselves quite impossible to be pulled out. Living among the rocks as they do, crevices and safety are usually within easy reach of Chuckwalla.

Mating takes place in late May and June. Eggs are laid in July or August in holes in the ground. Hatching takes place in late August or September, and the number of eggs to a clutch is from eight to fourteen. The babies are about two inches in length.

In spite of their languid appearance, their stubby legs can carry them with great speed. Watching a Chuckwalla at very close range, he looks demure and contented as any peaceful soul on earth. When frightened by noise or enemy, he has the appearance of a vicious monster from a prehistoric age.

But they are not vicious monsters. They are shy, yet friendly and curious. You can spend hours watching their antics, but, even if you do capture one to study, do not take him home. . . leave him in his own natural habitat for others to enjoy.



When danger threatens the Chuckwalla inflates his body



Early morning the lizard crawls out of his hole into the sun

# Exploring Ghost Railroads ---- An Introduction

By DW Grantham

I must confess that I am a confirmed ghost town buff. I spend many hours pouring over old books and maps, hoping to find a lost or at least forgotten remnant of the past that has not yet disappeared forever. Over the years, it has steadily become more and more difficult to find a site that has not been collected or vandalized.

It would not be practical for me to list all the towns and camps that have totally disappeared over the last decade or so. Ricardo, Garlock, Providence, Stedman, Lavic, the list just goes on and on. One of my more early and unpleasant experiences came with exploring Stedman and the Bagdad-

Chase Gold Mine site. Very quickly, over just a period of a year or two, I witnessed the town disappear forever into the desert sands through a combination of excessive vandalism and reckless methods for collecting camp relics. One morning while approaching the townsite, I noticed a plume of smoke rising from ahead. Upon arrival at Stedman, we found a group of visitors from a large city who had set the headframe of one of the mineshafts on fire and were sitting around watching it burn. Their attitude was that of "who cares, it is not being used anyway".

This level of destruction led me to seek other, more inaccessible sites to explore. I developed my idea from walking the abandoned

right of way of the Ludlow Southern Railroad which connected Stedman with Ludlow. While walking the roadbed, I discovered many things one would not normally be able to see or find. I found where the train was stored and serviced. Spikes and tie plates were occasionally found sticking out of the sand. And I found various sites that indicated they were previously occupied by someone who preferred to live close to the railroad.

Then I started to notice the various roads and trails that led down from the hills to the roadbed. Many had not been used for a long time. Following these trails often led to a mine site or



A Santa Fe Freight Passing Bouse, Arizona



A Southern Pacific Train passes the site of an abandoned station

An Abandoned Railroad right of way.  
Note that it is narrow



A Santa Fe Railway Baggage Car  
on display in Scottsdale, Arizona



Example of railroad dike  
(raised roadbed)

other center of human habitation.  
I was hooked.

My readings have taught me that there are a multitude of abandoned railroads in the Southwestern United States. Colorado is perhaps the state with the most abandoned lines, but all the other states showed many promising leads.

Consider for a moment the following abandoned (ghost) railroads and the areas they served: California: Carson and Colorado, Tecopa RR, Death Valley RR, Tonopah and Tidewater, Bodie and Benton. Nevada: Virginia & Truckee, Nevada Copper Belt, Dayton, Sutro and Gold Hill, Eureka & Palisade, Pioche & Bullionville. Arizona: Arizona & Southern, Arizona & Swansea, Tombstone & Southern, Twin Buttes. The list goes on and on.

So how do you go about finding one of these ghost railroads and following its path? The first stop is at the library. Pick a geographic area. Then refer to books on 1) The area 2) Railroads 3) Transportation 4) History. If an area was served by a vanished railroad, some reference should turn up from those subjects. In addition, most states have a Railroad Commission or such that is charged with the regulation of railroads within their state. They will have detailed records on the roads.

Now that we have done all our library homework, we must prepare for the field work. First, a map of the route must be acquired along with a topographic map and road map. The major points (intersections, sidings, stations, etc) should be identified and located on the topographic map.

Next comes the easy part. Pack your vehicle with the necessary equipment, pick a date, arrange for your friends to accompany you, and depart.

Upon arrival at your destination, you might wonder what to do next.



The site of an abandoned siding and station. Note the shadow of the removed rails on the ties.



Railroad Artifacts in the dirt.  
Spikes and a Spike plate.

Let's take an example. One of my favorite non-desert railroads is the Sierra Railway in Central California. In December 1983, I wrote about the long abandoned Angeles Branch. Let's look at a typical field trip to that locale.

Upon arrival in Jamestown, we find a State Museum and operating railroad. But that is the Standard to Oakdale line. The map indicates that the line used to split off and head northward to Angels Camp. After a close examination of the area, a single track is found that leads to the north. Obviously not in use, we follow it. It goes behind several houses and businesses and deadends. This is what we are looking for--the point from which the tracks have been removed.

From this point to the highway, nothing is visible. Not even an area where tracks might have been. So we cross the highway and look there. No sign, even at Woods Creek, which must have been crossed with a small bridge. So we proceed north along Rawhide Road, looking for any sign of a right-of-way. As we approach the summit, it suddenly turns right and goes straight along the side of a mesa, which appears to be a lava flow. Past the former town of Rawhide, and towards Shaws Flat, the roadbed is easily recognizable and in use for autos. Then it turns left and heads straight for a ghost mining town, Tuttletown. Here and there we are able to identify portions of the right-of-way and railroad dike.

After a short visit to the ruins of Tuttletown, things began to get challenging. The railbed headed north by northwest, curving towards what is locally called "Jackass Hill". Back along the roadbed, which we walked, we found a number of old mines and shafts. Then we got a surprise. The curves going along the mountain were so steep that the trains had to use a series of switchbacks. The train actually had to back up part of the mountain. Once on

top of the hill, the roadbed crossed Highway 49, went through a cut, and recrossed the highway.

The roadbed then went along the side of a hill and turned east. Here, at one time, it descended the mountain and crossed the river on a bridge. Then it went by the ghost town of Robinson's Ferry (under water now) and climbed the hill on the north side of the river. The portion of the right of way not under water is easy to follow. Crossing Highway 49 again (at a level some 15 feet above the present highway, the rails served the mines of Carson Hill. At this site is a glory hole of very large proportions. Here, too, were several sidings. The roadbed then went north towards the town of Angels Camp where the line ended. At Angels Camp, we found the station still in use, but as a private residence.

In summary, by following this abandoned branch line, we visited the ghost towns of Rawhie, Tuttletown, Robinsons, Carson Hill, Melones, Irvine, and the current town of Angels Camp and Jamestown. Along the way we found many inactive mines, numerous old buildings and formerly occupied sites. Our list of places to revisit with a metal detector and equipment grew large. And we are sure that we did not find all the interesting places. And I know of several other abandoned stretches of the Sierra Railway just waiting to be explored.

Our finds of the trip were several ceramic type beer bottles from Scotland and some spikes. But we had a great time for two days and saw some really scenic country, laced with large amounts of history. Exploring ghost railroads can be great fun and adventure. Why not try exploring one in your locale??

# The Lost Dutchman Legend

## REVISITED

By Dr. David Redd

Of all of the lost mine stories of the American Southwest, perhaps the best known is that of the Lost Dutchman Mine of the Superstition Mountains of Central Arizona. More has been written on this fabulously rich lost mine than one can possibly read. But let's get one thing straight right now—I do not believe that the Lost Dutchman Mine exists, except as a mighty tall tale. Nor do I believe that Jacob Waltz or Walzer ever had a rich mine, much less a lost or carefully hidden one. As always, I welcome letters from our readers on this subject. Maybe someone out there knows something I don't.

Anyway, through my readings and explorations, I have come to the conclusion that if any lost mine or treasure exists in the Superstitions, it is most probably a Peralta discovery or maybe the lost Apache Gold Mine. I tend to favor the Peralta discovery, but who is to say that the Peralta's did not find the Apache Mine or that the Apache Indians mined an abandoned Peralta location? (Pesh-la-Chi?)

One of the most readable, although somewhat "enlivened" accounts of the Peralta ventures, appeared some years ago (1945) in this magazine. The text of that article follows. In the next issue, I will explain why I believe the Dutchman never had a rich but hidden mine—anywhere.

### LOST MINES OF THE PERALTAS

Apache thunder gods were first in the wild Superstitions. They were there a thousand ages before Conquistadores called the unknown land Pimeria Alta, before white men had given a name to that incredibly twisted maze of somber canyons and jagged, lofty crags which rise abruptly like a lost world set apart high above the Arizona wastelands.

The thunder gods are still there in the weird immensity of their domain as all good Indians will affirm—and many white men also. But now there is gold, yellow glittering gold, found and lost with bleaching bones to guard it, and strange noises in the nightwind. And a pagan curse is abroad on the land—the curse of all men who have too little and want too much.

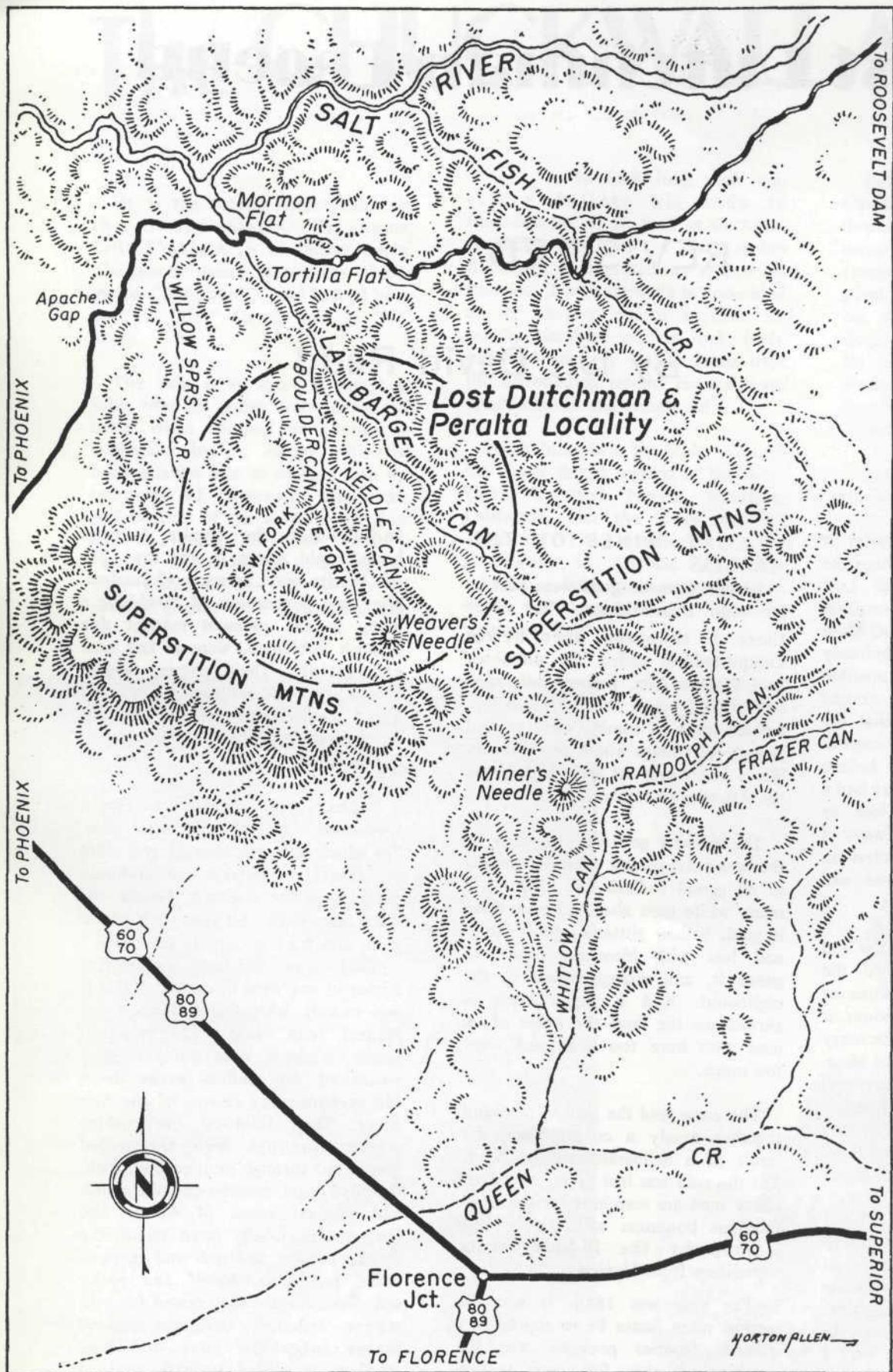
The curse and the gold were found together nearly a century ago, the result of a deliberate treasure hunt. But the gold was lost again. And even today men are searching for the eight fabulous bonanzas which were first worked by the ill-fated Peralta expedition from Mexico.

The year was 1846. It was the period when Santa Fe as capital of a remote frontier province was the jumping off place for a vast western territory infested by savage

Indians—and, the Peralta brothers hoped, gold mines in the raw. For the Peralta silver mines in Chihuahua, after two generations of furnishing a living in the pleasant manner due Spanish noblemen, were at last near exhaustion. Their owner, Miguel Peralta, had just returned home from a trip to the headwaters of the Rio Salado with a perfect way to remedy the situation.

"This rio drains a virgin wilderness," he told his eager sons, "in which gold anywhere will give clues to itself as placer-erosion-borne particles—in the riverbed. Follow the river then until you find such placer gold, and trace it back to its source."

This was excellent prospecting advice in any time or country. And it was exactly what Pedro, Ramon and Manuel with their little band of family retainers were doing as they journeyed for endless weeks down the ever-widening course of the Salt River. They followed the rushing waters through high sheerwalled gorges cut through multicolored rock, travelled past boulder-choked rapids and verdant oases of willow and cottonwood, briefly green against the eternal browns and reds and greys of tuffa, sandstone, basalt and rocky soil. Occasionally they tested for gold where tributary drainages poured water into the river or where sandbars or rifled bedrock made a natural gold trap in the riverbed



itself. And always they pressed relentlessly on toward a horizon as distant and vague as the purple clouds at sunset. Then finally on a lucky fall day they rounded an abrupt bend in the river's shadowed chasm to find before them (at the present site of Mormon Flat) a veritable paradise in that country of sun-baked, rainbow-hued rock, a small, verdant valley in the middle of which La Barge creek, then unnamed, tumbled down in miniature cascades from a range of jagged mountains on the south. From the wild, uncharted Superstitions!

So was history made. And so began legend. . . For there at the junction of the stream and the river they fell to work with goldpan and shovel as they had a hundred times before. But this time, gold was there, a fabulous treasure trove of bright, yellow flakes, caught beneath the sands of the riverbed from a million years of rock-pulverizing erosion above.

Indeed only a fantastic bonanza containing undreamed of wealth somewhere in the rugged maze of deep canyons and rock spires above could have released such a store of treasure. And with the first wild shout of discovery the trek of the Peralta bros. stopped with dramatic suddenness, and an excited consultation was held.

By this time their provisions had dwindled. And Pedro, who as eldest brother was in nominal command, decided to split up their forces in the interest of speed. And he left Ramon and Manuel to build a permanent camp at the desert oasis and construct the two arrastas which still may be seen there when the water is low. And so the two grew wealthier and more selfish day by day as they worked the placer beds. As gold piled up, they grew ever more fearful of the newly found fortune. SULKING savages had been seen in the vicinity.

In the meantime Pedro was on the trail of golden ore for the arrastas which he had ordered built. Higher and higher he climbed from La Barge

into Boulder creek, on up Needle Canyon and into the very heart of the Apache Thunder Gods' own sacred mountains. There within a region from one to two miles northerly of a towering, hat-shaped peak which he named La Sombrera, the placer trail thinned out and he fell to prospecting for the source of the metal.

First, he tried a steep tributary canyon (now known as Bluff Springs), followed its brush and boulder choked course upward over waterfalls and cliffs to the top of the high, plateau like Bluff Springs mountain, and left behind as proof of his presence narrow exploration cross-cuts on several quartz veins. Again, he tried farther up Needle

Canyon which drains the west slopes of Bluff Springs Mountain, and left another crosscut on the side of a hill. Then finally high on the eastern slopes of a black-topped mountain a mile and a half due north of La Sombrera, he came upon rich twin outcrops of reddish, gold bearing quartz. Circling around the same mountain he found a third on the north side and still another below the southwestern slopes. Four bonanzas!

Exciting weeks fled then in swift succession while the wheel of fortune spun crazily. But soon provisions were gone and the mules were staggering under capacity loads of shining yellow rock ready to be crushed in the arrastas. Pedro, after the fashion of miners who must leave

good ore behind, went down into Needle canyon below, into which the eastern slopes of the black-topped mountain drained, and there made a key marker by driving stones into a giant saguaro cactus. This cactus stood upon the end of a rocky ridge which jutted into the canyon and was consequently outlined in bold relief against the sky so that it would have been almost impossible for him later to pass by without seeing it. Then from this marker he made a triangulation map by drawing the outlines of both the fabulous mountain to the west and La Sombrera to the south so anyone could return to the proper region merely by traveling up Needle Canyon until a point was reached from which both landmarks matched the chart from entirely different directions.

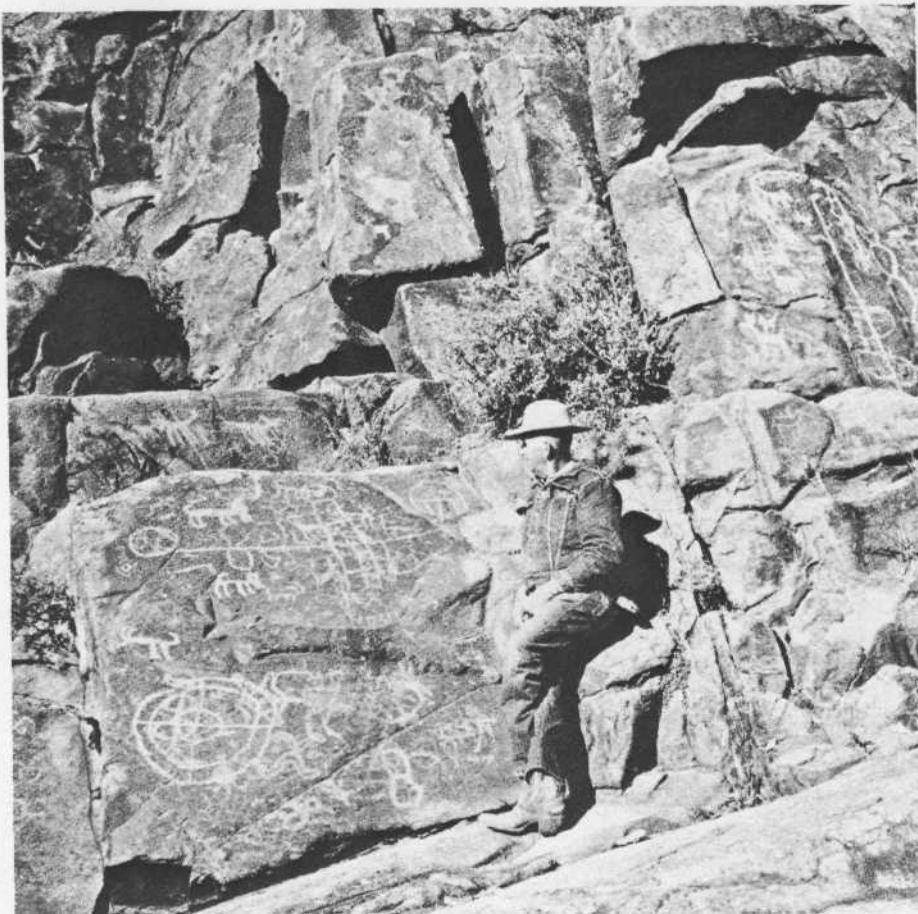
Then Pedro returned to the river to find his brothers impatiently awaiting him.

Indians, it seemed, were the trouble—and the impatience that a golden fortune would bring to anyone. Nor did Pedro's tale of yet more gold change their minds.

"We already have enough for a lifetime," explained Ramon and Manuel. "And we have decided to enjoy it while we may. We want to go far south of the village Tucson where cattle flourish and establish a great rancho. For here each day more savages come to prowl about and harass us. Soon we might be overwhelmed. And then what of our gold?"

Pedro laughed at their fears. He loved gold more than he feared disaster. Moreover, the gold was inexhaustible, it seemed, a prize in a thrilling game. So wasn't the gamble of finding it, the risk of getting away with it of far more importance?

"We part then," Pedro said, "because I am returning home for a larger expedition with which to work the mines. So let us divide all equally



These prehistoric petroglyphs have been called treasure symbols by uninformed persons. They were here long before the Dutchman.

with a fourth share for padre. And will draw each of you a chart shot you desire later to return."

The two copies of Pedro's map which went south into Sonora with Ramon and Manuel were bright threads in the amazing skein of golden disaster which Apache Thunder Gods were even then weaving with sardonic mirth. For the towering pinnacles and sheer, chasm-cliffs of the Superstitions were age-long Apache domain--sacred ground to be guarded with life and honor by every savage who feared the midsummer lightning bolts and crashing thunder, the roaring floods of winter which angry deities sent down those deep, rough canyons!

Back from Chihuahua City to

those same mountains came Pedro again in the winter of 1847-48 with 68 men and 200 mules. Back to golden fortune--and savage death!

No sooner had he returned to the arrastas upon the river in the fall of 1847 than skulking savages began to appear, were glimpsed here and there like furtive ghosts.

The very nature of that incredibly rough country, the somber chasms of La Barge, Boulder and Needle Canyons, each with its labyrinth of countless tributary arroyos made excellent cover in which silent Apaches came and vanished like furtive phantoms. And continually from such vantage places warriors kept the gold hungry invaders under surveillance, occasionally transfixing a luckless miner with flint-tipped arrows that seemed to come from nowhere.

If Pedro had been a soldier he would have recognized the unmistakable portents of impending disaster and would have kept his men together. But he was a miner and the mad, driving urge to dig quick fortune from his mines, the romantic, reckless impulse to search for yet more gold at the same time made him ignore danger. And so he divided his strength, leaving a handful of workers at the arrastas, splitting the

others into mining and prospecting parties which were scattered over several square miles in the wild region around the black-topped mountain which he had mapped before.

The prospecting parties almost immediately discovered two more potential bonanzas above the key marker in Needle Canyon, both lying upon the steep slopes of a hill jutted into the canyon from the western side. Then directly across from this hill in a steep-climbing arroyo which ran up the canyon's eastern side and under towering cliffs still a third vein of rich, gold bearing quartz was found. Later, further exploration located one more mine site about three-quarters of a mile east of La Sombrera, near the western slopes of La Barge Canyon. But this latter mine, which was rediscovered in 1940, was merely a conglomerate placer deposit formed in prehistoric times when the mountains lay under the sea and its gravels failed to match in fantastic richness the white and rose quartz ores of the other seven bonanzas.

There began in the Superstitions then feverish activity such as the mountains had never before witnessed. Permanent camps, of which there are still traces, were established in Needle, Bluff Springs and La Barge Canyons, and in one of the arroyos at the foot of La Sombrera Pedro had a stone hut erected from which he could direct the mining. Nearby, too, charcoal pits in which to retemper and sharpen drills were dug and fired, trees were felled and hewed into mine timbers and always the shafts were sunk deeper and deeper into gold-speckled ore which busy muletrains gathered and hauled to the arrastas. And so for many months the profitable business of mining went on.

By now the winter of 1847-48 had come and gone, the brief desert spring had long since faded and the heat of summer was on the wane. And then suddenly the Apaches, who had been content with occasional raids upon isolated miners and packers, began to attack in earnest. The roving bands of warriors grew

constantly larger so that Pedro was forced to place more and more of his men upon guard duty to protect those mining. And unknown to him under cover of the harrassing attacks wily Apache chieftains far to the north across the river were massing together hundreds of braves with whom to destroy at one blow the invaders who so tenaciously worked and fought within their sacred mountains.

Pedro's first hint of the impending catastrophe came from the river on an unlucky September day when a scout staggered into camp to gasp out with his life a horrible tale of massacre at the arrastas. The Apaches had slaughtered the astonished workers upon the river and even at that moment were ambushing guards and packers. Then other scouts rushed into camp to inform the miners that death was indeed upon them, that hordes of fierce savages were swarming into the Superstitions in over-whelming numbers and had already surrounded them upon all sides but the west.

Pedro immediately ordered his mules burdened with treasure had them packed with all the golden concentrates which they could carry. A local cowboy in 1901 stumbled upon \$35,000 worth amid a heap of Spanish-shod mulebones on top of the black-topped mountain. And while the miners fought a desperate rear-guard action there Pedro himself buried the remainder on the fabulous hill which he had mapped, cutting in solid rock upon the top in the form of Spanish miner's signs a permanent memorandum of its location and the nearby locations of his richest mines. Then his band of miners fled in frenzied haste toward the open desert to the west--fled in the only direction which had been left open.

But they fled into a trap!

Apaches were there waiting, were indeed everywhere--hideously painted savages, riding madly upon bare-backed ponies, screaming, fighting, killing in a blood-thirsty, superstitious frenzy. They drove the miners back against the mountain cliffs within sight and sound of the present location of Goldfield. Then

from all sides came a deadly hail of arrows, savagely hurled lances . . . .

The Apaches promptly scalped their victims and looted the packtrain, thinking they had obtained a fortune in booty. But unwittingly they left a greater fortune behind—yellow dirt, so they thought, which they dumped disdainfully upon the ground. Many years later in 1914 two prospectors, C.H. Silverlock and a partner, digging in curiosity amid the debris of a massacre, found part of it there—\$18,000 in glittering golden concentrates!

Now the invaders had indeed been destroyed to the last man. But there still remained in the sacred domain of the thunder gods the sacrilegious work they had wrought. Moreover,

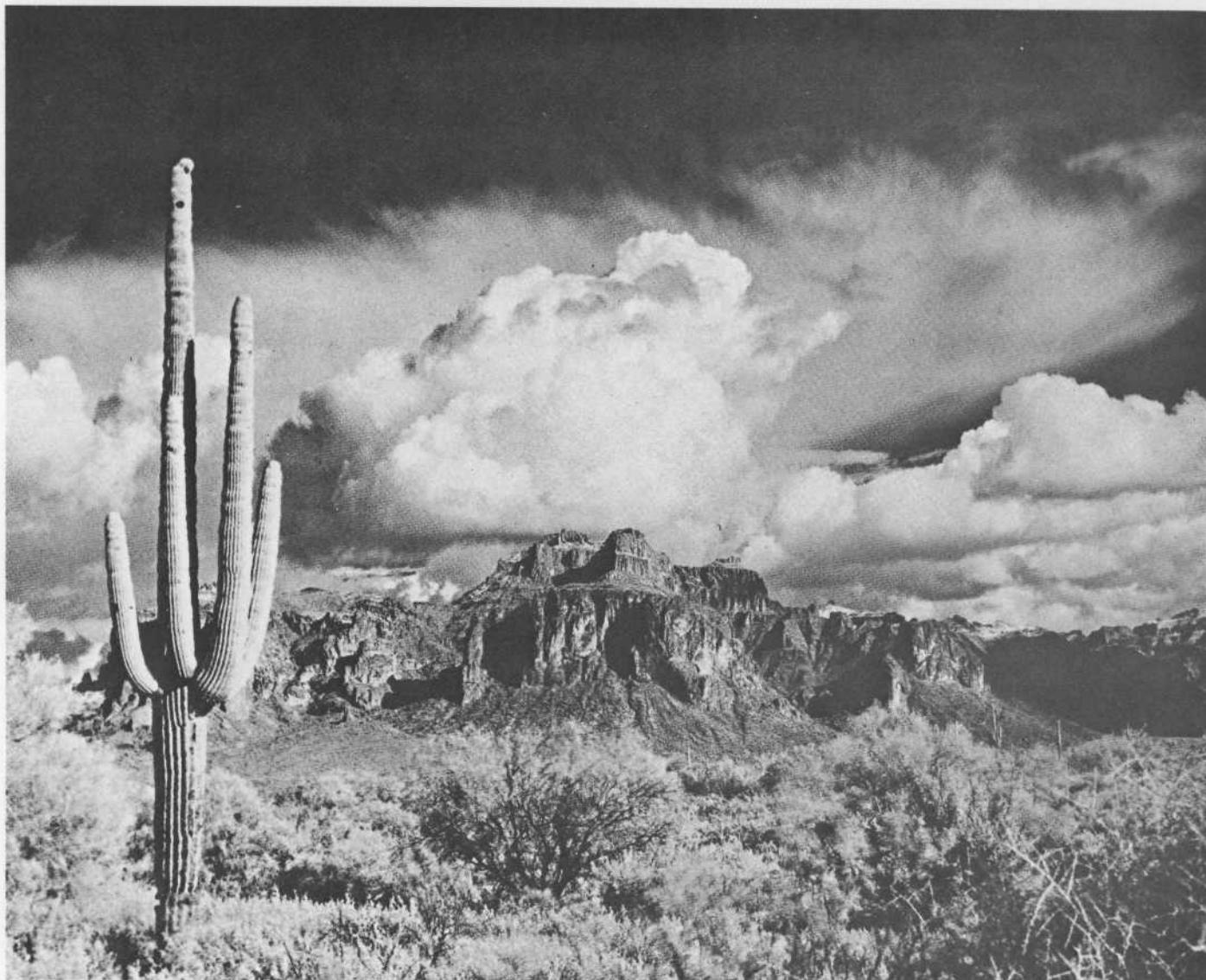
the mine shafts and the yellow-flecked rock which had been uncovered there would no doubt be found again. And then once more an invading horde would swarm into the mountains. Should such a thing occur once more, said the medicine men holding solemn council upon the matter, the Apaches might forever after be punished severely by storms and floods and all manner of natural disasters which angry deities could contrive. So it was decreed that a band of thirty squaws and two youths would be sent back into the Superstitions to destroy all traces of the workings and cover the mines.

And there in the mountains this work party labored for one full moon, throwing ore and hastily

abandoned tools back into the shafts. Then they covered the mines with stout logs which in turn were covered with the natural caliche cement that hardens into rock, placing over the whole yet another covering in the cunning Indian fashion—this time of dirt and surface rocks to match the surrounding ground.

But with all this care the Apache squaws left one mine open because they thought it so well isolated and hidden that it would never again be found. And it was the most fantastic bonanza of them all, a mere shallow pit, newly opened, which was destined to become America's most sought-for mine. This was the legendary treasure that was to become known later as the Lost Dutchman Mine.

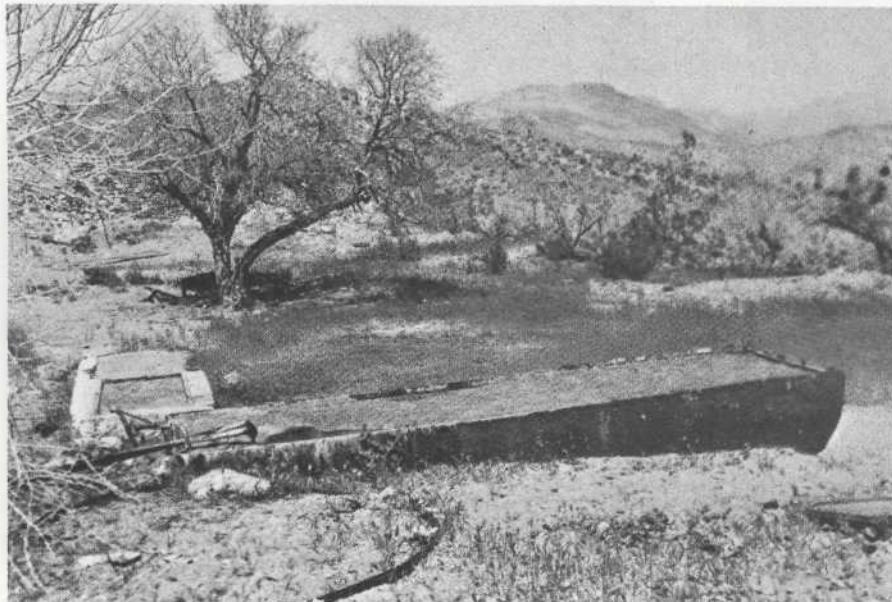
*The Superstitions in a dramatic mood.*



# EXPLORING SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY GHOST

## TOWNS PART ONE: IVANPAH

by Michael Bandini



*Once-filled water tanks and grassy areas are now dry and barren.*



*Ruins of stone houses are good grounds for use of metal detectors.*

San Bernardino County is literally covered with ghost towns and vanished camps. Perhaps one of the lesser known of those ghost towns is Ivanpah. The name is of Indian origin and is Southern Piute for "good water", an obvious reference to the existing and former springs at the site. South of the Mesquite Mountain Range, on the eastern slope of the Clark Mountains, lies the remains of this old silver mining camp. The site is quite close to the Nevada State line. This, the original townsite, is not to be confused with the present day settlement and railroad facility, by the same name, on the Union Pacific Railroad between Nipton and Cima, Cal. That settlement, which I call "new Ivanpah", is a relative youngster, having been founded in 1903.

The old, original town of Ivanpah was situated around springs that are now shown on topographic maps as Ivanpah Springs. The records of the Post Office Department in Washington D.C. list the location as 81 miles north of Fenner, on the Santa Fe Railway line to Needles. (Current location is 11 miles southwest of Nipton). Ivanpah first came into public view as the result of silver discoveries and subsequent mining operations as early as 1867. This activity blossomed out to a full scale boom town with continued discoveries of valuable silver ore into the 1870's. The total silver production for the area has been estimated to be four million dollars, and that at a time when silver sold for less than \$1.00 per ounce. At

\$8.00 silver, the production estimate would approximate \$35,200,000.00, not too shabby even at todays inflated prices.

At the peak of production, between 1882 and 1885, Ivanpah boasted a population of 300. Wagon roads connected the mines with the town and led to junctions with roads leading to neighboring towns such as Goodsprings (Yellow Pine Mining District) and Barstow (Waterman Junction). The townsite was broken up into segments, each one near one of the springs and having numerous structures located nearby. In addition to the usual assortment of residences and commercial buildings, the town had a post office, which opened on June 17, 1878.

Some of the ruins are identifiable as to their purpose. Two mills were built at the town, and one can be recognized. The ruins of the smelter, the assay office, some of the stone

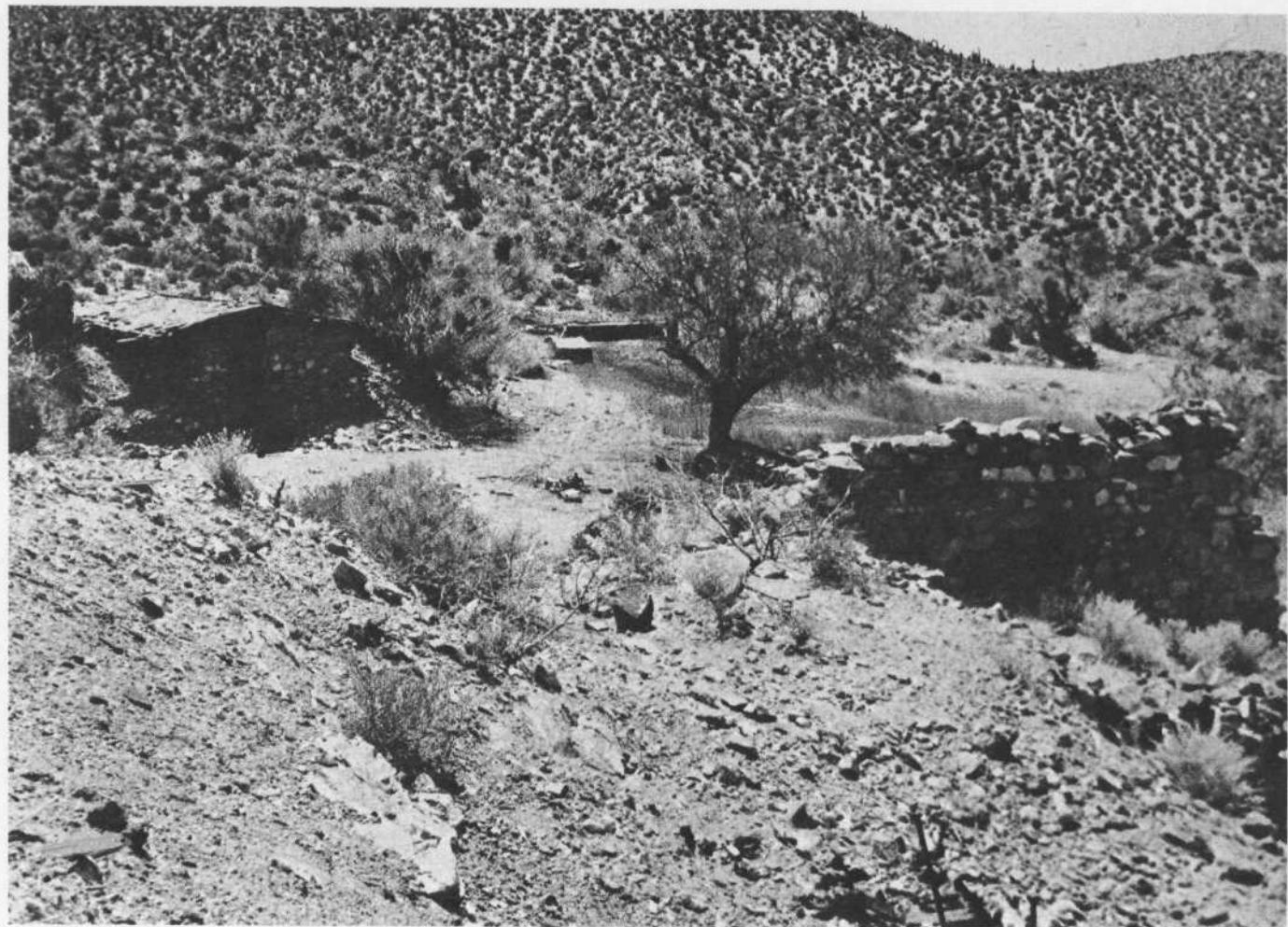
buildings, a few adobe type block houses and a few "dugout" type shelters are also recognizable. In addition, there are some remains from later attempts to reactivate mining in the area.

This is truly a ghost town. Not many people visit the quiet old lady of yesterday, and a feeling of awe and deep respect is prevalent as one walks around through the ruins and underbrush. It would not surprise me if there are still to be discovered dugout homes and adobe ruins in the area, buried under many years of growth of weeds and brush. Packrats, unmolested by man, have built many large nests. Some of these nests have been found to contain old bottles and other relics of interest to the ghost town buff or collector of Western Americana.

Unfortunately, two of the springs have gone dry, but one still produces clear, sparkling water that is caught

in two large metal tanks for use by cattle. Wild burros depend upon this source of water and are still watching over the townsite as not very silent sentries. If you are fortunate, you may be able to take a few good photographs of the burros as they climb over the washes and hills of the area.

To reach the site of "Old Ivanpah", travel north on Interstate 15 towards Las Vegas, Nevada. Travel past Barstow, by Baker, and 43.5 miles beyond Baker you will approach the Yates Well offramp. Exit the freeway at this offramp and travel .6 of a mile west to a stop sign on a stretch of the old highway. Make a right turn and travel north. Quickly, you will come across a gate. If it is closed, open it and pass through. BE SURE TO CLOSE THIS GATE AFTER YOU HAVE DRIVEN YOUR CAR PAST IT. If it is open, you might be kind and close it. Otherwise, cattle can wander all over



the place and either get lost or injured.

Four-tenths of a mile further up the road, make a left turn. There is a fork in the road at this point. Travel another three-tenths of a mile in a westerly direction and another gate is reached. Again, be sure to close the gate behind you. Proceed another 5.5 miles from this gate, pass under the high voltage power lines, and an abandoned house will appear. This ruin is a remnant of more modern times.

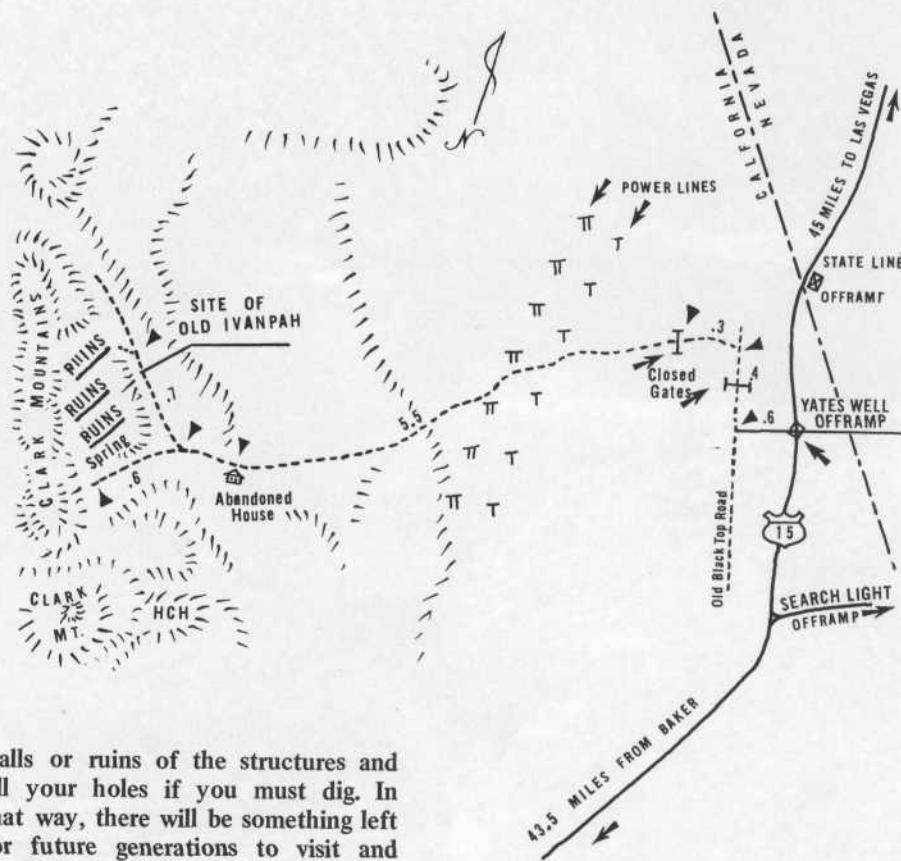
Just beyond this abandoned house, the road forks. This is the site of the ghost town of Ivanpah. The left fork continues six-tenths of a mile, ending at the previously described water tanks. At the tanks is a nice grassy spot (in season) where water has irrigated the local vegetation. It is a good spot to stop and explore the area. Nearby are the mill ruins and some of the stone buildings. The area is best explored by foot. Remember, this is the desert and at certain times of the year, walking must be done with caution, less one suddenly discover a rattle snake.

Returning to the forks of the road, take the right fork. In seven-tenths of a mile the northern most portion of the town will have been reached. It is best, again, to park your vehicle and walk. For those who are interested in looking for bottles, it would be advisable to take along a metal detector to help find hidden piles of cans. Many of these trash piles were shallow pits that are now filled with dirt and rock or covered over by brush. Look for them in an area that would have been near a home or in a ravine that would catch them as water carried them away, during one of the desert's infrequent gully washers.

Any area that would have been a natural place for the people to have thrown their cans and bottles is a good place to start your search. Diligent searching should discover many more relics. Who knows, maybe you will be the next one to find a sun-colored medicine bottle or some other token of a long gone era. As always, be careful not to damage the



*With a population of 300 in its heyday, Ivanpah's mines produced more than \$4,000,000 in silver. Today, the once flowing springs are dry and the rock houses of the miners are occupied by packrats. Little known, the area may be rich in bottles and other collectors' finds. Undergrowth has covered many locations.*



walls or ruins of the structures and fill your holes if you must dig. In that way, there will be something left for future generations to visit and appreciate the past.

# THE TERRIBLE TARANTULA

by Tim St. George



THE DANCE of the Tarantella started it. Malevolent Dr. Fu Manchu added to the legend. And fear and ignorance perpetuated the base canards about the ferocity and dangers of the tarantulas.

No doubt these hairy arachnids are somewhat creepy-looking, but the fact is, the North American tarantula bite is seldom administered until the tarantula has been plagued beyond endurance by someone interested in measuring a spider's patience. There is said to be one variety in South America big enough and deadly enough to capture and feast on small birds, but ours are friendly, useful bug eaters.

Tarantulas love to primp and enjoy being stroked or combed with a small, soft brush. Youngsters occasionally match them for harness races, a thread being tied about the spiders' bodies to keep them on the track. Squeamish teachers have dispatched the author's son when his tarantula accidentally popped out from a matchbox on the school room floor. (Dead, some boys chop the body hair and use it as itching powder. It is an irritant and used by the spider in defending itself.)

But such youngsters and tarantulas need all the friends they can get. The spider, not the boy, has a Nemesis in the form of a wasp, the "Tarantula Hawk" (*Pepsis thisbe*) which will take on a tarantula several times

its size simply to lay one egg and perpetuate the hawk's clan.

Once contact is made, the spider and wasp circle warily, looking for openings. Then one or the other makes a lunge. Engaged, the tarantula tries to sink its hypodermic-like fangs into the wasp's abdomen. But there are armor-plated scales which seldom are penetrated. Meanwhile, the wasp has inserted its stinger into a vital area, always where nerve ganglia are located. The effect is dramatic in that the stricken tarantula staggers and shudders in true movie fashion as he goes limp, prey to the Tarantula Hawk.

The wasp is just as efficient in preparing the cadaver as a birthplace for its young. She first cleans herself of any remaining tarantula venom, then flips the tarantula over and drags it into either the spider's own home, or a nearby burrow. The wasp carefully scrapes away the irritating hair on the abdomen, then lays one white egg, and leaves, after carefully plugging the entrance with dirt and debris to insure a safe, large meal for the wasp when it hatches.

Though being host for a parasite is its last act, the tarantula gobbles up numerous harmful insects and generally minds its own business without harm to man. Deserving a better press than it receives, the tarantula should be recognized as harmless and helpful, rather than hirsute and horrendous. //

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Salome was so dry  
her legendary pet frog  
carried a canteen and  
never learned to swim because  
there were no puddles of water.

# DICK WICK HALL

by Karen Davis

It isn't easy to find out who Dick Wick Hall really was. Most libraries, even in Arizona and California have little or no material on him. Randall Henderson, Founder of DESERT MAGAZINE says he was a good friend. So just who was he? De Forest Hall (his true name--originally) was born in Creston, Iowa on March 30, 1877.

His adventures were numerous. He attended college, served in a war, collected rattlesnakes in Florida, and went on to become Arizona's great humorist. It was at the Nebraska State Fair that Hall heard about the Hopi Indians of Arizona and their religious rights. As an amateur herpetologist, he was intrigued by their use of live rattlesnakes in religious dances. So, in 1898, at the ripe old age of 21, Hall travelled to Northern Arizona and the Hopi Reservation. Here he took a job as a census taker. He then lived with the Hopi for a while, gaining a valuable insight into the people and their philosophies.

After this, he obtained a job on the old Tewksberry Ranch in Pleasant Valley. This site, in north-eastern Arizona, is known as the setting of the bloody callteman-sheepman feud between the Grahams and the Tewksberrys.

Hall wrote enthusiastic accounts of life in Arizona to the family back home. Thus, his entire family moved out west. His brother, Ernest later became Secretary of State of Arizona. Dick Hall's closest encounter with state government was his next job--on the construction of the State Capitol.

DeForest's next venture was an indicator of things to come--as a promotor. For the remainder of his life, Hall was to become one of the greatest promoters of Arizona. This new job also set Hall up as a newspaperman. The job was editing the Wickenburg News-Herald, which had not been an outstanding success before, and which, after about 10 months under his guidance, went deep

in the red. To regain the losses, Hall printed an edition whose front page glistened with a coating of real gold and copper dust. In that edition, he made a request for financial support from his readers. This request was also the first known example of his published humor. It read:

"The past ten months serve to  
remind us  
Editors don't stand a chance  
Editors don't stand a chance  
The more we work we find  
behind us  
Bigger Patches on our pants  
Then let each one show how  
they like us  
Send what you can to Dick  
Wick Hall  
Or when the fall winds come  
to strike us  
We won't have no pants at all."

This is also the first time we find his new name in use. By court order, he had it changed. From an article in the April 27, 1902 ARIZONA REPUBLICAN,



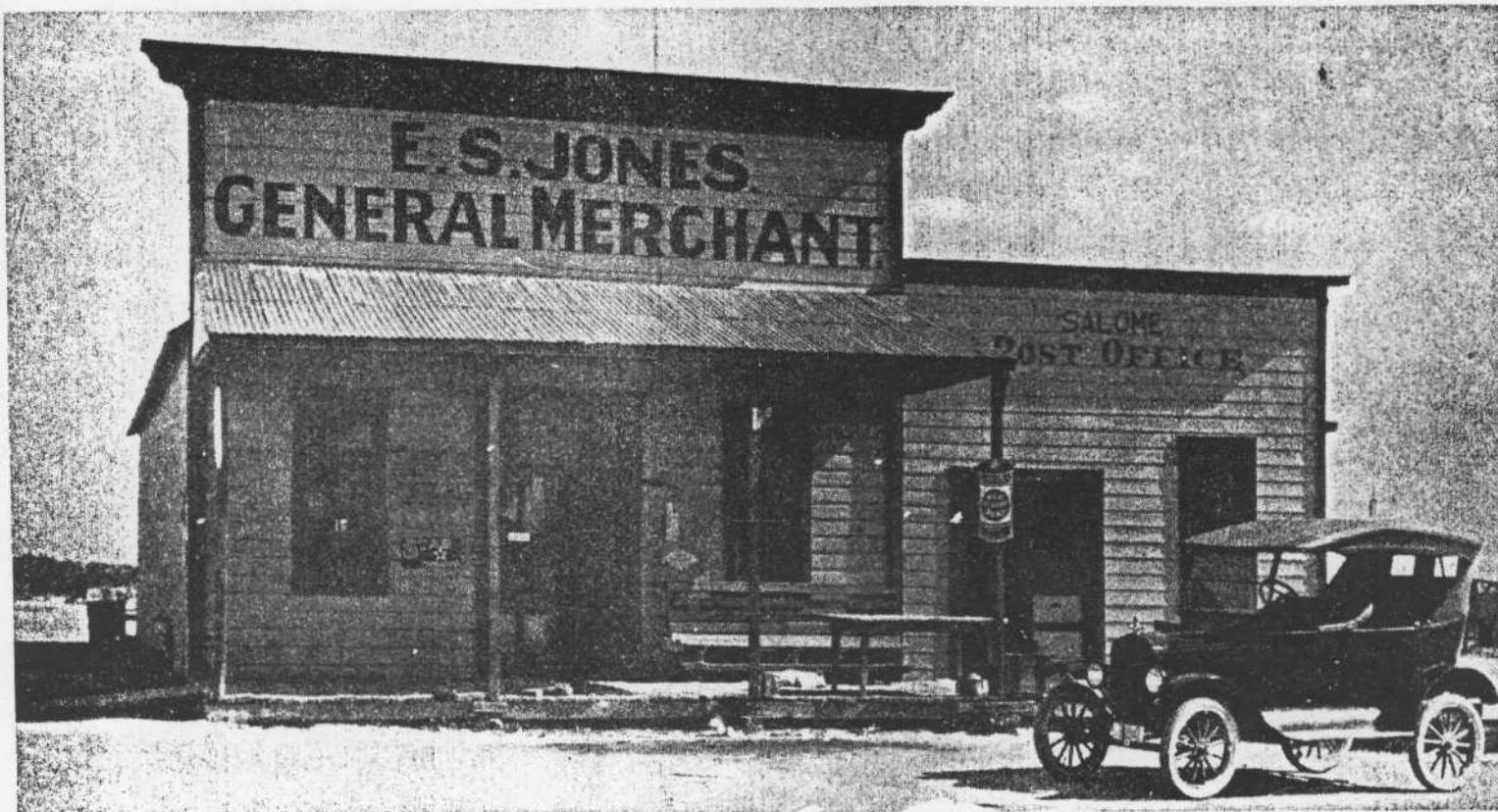


*From 1906 until his death in 1926, Dick Wick Hall brought international fame to the town he founded. He is shown here in front of his "Laughing Gas" service station.*

comes the following: "Dick Hall came down from Wickenburg yesterday and will be in the city (Phoenix) for a few days. He came for the express purpose of changing his name and he is not going to get married to accomplish that purpose either. He says 'Dick' is all right for a name as far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. He is going to space it out therefore with the alliterative name of 'Wick' so that hereafter he will be known as 'Dick Wick Hall.' This is purely a matter of patriotism with him. He says any man ought to be proud of the town in which he lives? at least he is, and he lives in Wickenburg, or 'Wick' for short."

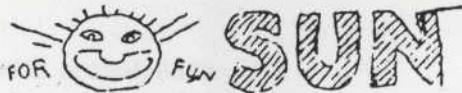
In 1903 or 1904, Dick, tired of prospecting around the area with his brother, Ernest, began plans to develop the Salome area. He had become a victim of gold fever when a miner, thought to be Shorty Alger, set off a dynamite blast which uncovered a fabulously rich pocket of gold-ore running \$100 or more per pound (gold sold for less than \$20 an ounce at this time). In no time at all, some 2,000 people were milling around the area west of Wickenburg. The bonanza was short lived and most prospectors went back home.

Dick decided that gold was not only where, but in whatever form you found it, so he and Ernest filed on 100,000 acres of land and sank a well. This was called the Grace Valley Development Company. Soon a few buildings were hastily thrown together around the wells site. Today, this spot is about one-half mile north of the present town of Salome.



*Old Jones store and post office*

# SALOME SUN



MADE WITH A LAUGH ON A MIMEOGRAPH BY A ROUGH NECK STAFF.  
A BIGGER UNPAID CIRCULATION THAN LYDIA PINKHAM'S ALMANAC

DICK WICK HALL, EDITOR - "PUT" DRAWS THE SCENERY

SALOME, YUMARESQUE COUNTY, ARIZONA.

DEAR FRIEND:

"WHERE SHE DANCED"

I Thank You for the Kindly Feeling which Prompted You to write me Such a Nice Letter - and I Want to Apologize for not being Able to write You a Warm Personal Letter Right Now, but So Many Folks have been sending me Postal Bouquets - or else Wanting to Know How Do I Get That Way - that one Corner of the Laughing Gas Station is All Piled up Full of Unanswered Mail, and I can't Keep Up. I am a 100 Miles from Phoenix and 300 from Los Angeles and all the Good (looking) Stenographers are Afraid to Come Here to Work for me on account of the Un Tamed Cow Boys or else they are just Jealous of the way Salome dances.

I don't know What Else to Do, so I am grinding out this Temporary Expression of My Appreciation of your Writing me, which was good for Both of Us, as Flowers is Scarce Out Here and it is Always the Best Way to Send - and to Get - the Flowers Before the Funeral - which Most of Us Never Do, and have to Wait until After we are Dead to Find Out What Folks thought about us. So I Thank You for the Verbal and Mental Flowers, including the Brick Bats and Boulders which sometimes come along with the Bouquets, and Some of these days, as soon as I can Get Time, I will write you a Real Letter - maybe this Year or Next - which is Pretty Soon for this country, where some of the Mountains are Over a Million Years Old and Look Just the Same like they did when I first came here and Planted the Cactus in Arizona.

RED HOT MAMA

It Keeps me pretty Busy Watering the Frog and telling Bed Time Stories to my Family of Household Pets, which "Put" has made some little Pictures here of for you to See, and in Between Times I peddle Laughing Gas and Gum and Bull Durham to Folks Going to - or Coming From - California by the Best & Shortest Route. All Tourists either Smoke the Bull or else they Peddle it - and I Do Both - for Over 30 Years - and So Long now that I Feel All Undressed if I haven't Got a Sack of Bull Somewhere in my Clothes - which is about All you need Clothes for Here in the Summer Time. Even My Frog is Part Bull. I have got to Quit Now. I hear a Tourist Hollering Outside where Some of My Pets has made him Climb a Cactus, which is just Their Way of Having a Little Fun, and I Don't Like to have Strangers Get Rough with My Cactus and Break the Thorns all Off.

RED HOT PAPA

Yours, Until the Frog Learns to Swim.

ADIOS, AMIGO!

DICK WICK HALL

Hall also began promoting a mine north of the settlement, and he gave this the ever glamorous name of the Arizona Northern, or better known as the Glory Hole. Litigation and bad engineering advice tied up the mine for many years and therefore, only the very rich "glory hole" ores were ever extracted. For a further story on the mine, see Desert, May 1985.

Both of these ventures were to be placed on the back burner when Dick decided that the railroad under construction from Wickenburg to Earp offered attractive financial possibilities. Along with E.S.Jones he opened a store to supply the needs of the railroad builders and their employees. This store was run by Jones who had operated a similar one in Congress and Wickenburg.

During the next few years, Dick spent much of his time promoting oil, mining, and real estate in California, Utah, Louisiana, Texas, and even Phoenix. But he always returned to his own town, Salome.

With the coming of the state highway, which paralleled the railroad from Wickenburg, business picked up. Unfortunately, this dictated a move for the town as it was north of the railroad tracks and the highway was on the south side. One of the better known businesses was the Blue Rock Inn, operated by the Jones family. The other was the auto garage.

The garage was on Hall's land and he was a partner in the business. Quickly, it became much more than a garage. Hall realized that motor travel was here to stay so he set about planning to land more of the tourist business. Calling on his knack for words and his humor, he renamed the garage "The Laffing Gas Station," and began publicizing it by means of a unique, single sheet newspaper, which he called the "SALOME SUN," avowedly "Just for fun---made with a laugh on a mimeograph by a rough neck staff." This was, he said, a first class newspaper----"because it has to be sent out in an envelope with a 2 cent stamp on it."



A WARM BABY  
HOT AT BOTH ENDS



SEVEN YEARS OLD  
AND I CAN'T SWIM  
I'LL SAY IT'S DRY

*A page from the Salome Sun*

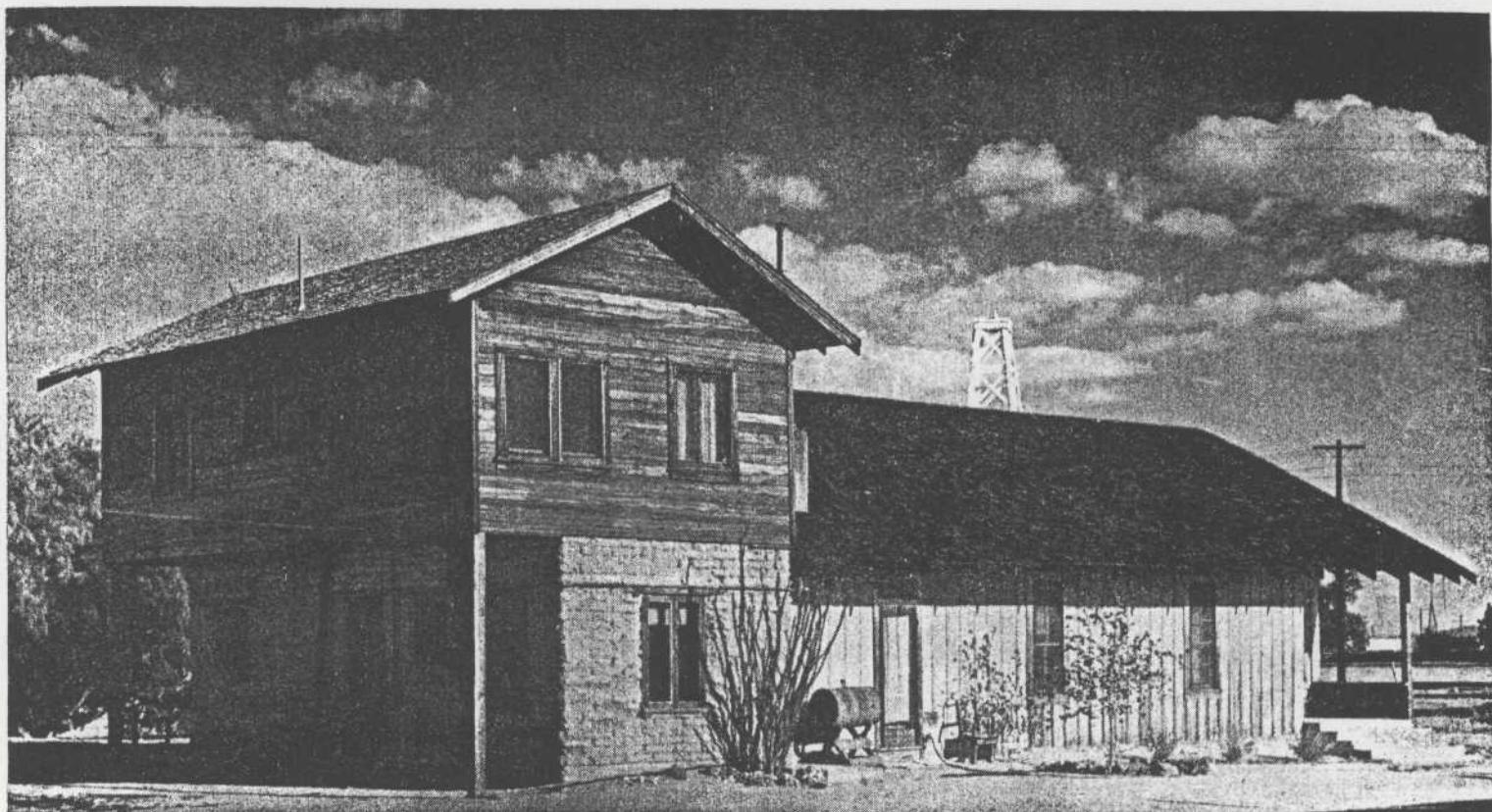
*Sign of the famous frog*



(Anyone out there remember when a letter cost 2 cents to mail?) And, according to the masthead, the newspapers main aim was "to make you smile for half a mile."

Dick had his own wry, yet gentle kind of fun poking wit that still is easy on the ear and delights the mind. His famous frog is an example of that wit. This is what he had to say of how it came into being: Salome, Yumaresque County, Arizona—"Where she danced"—was dry long before Volstead was weaned. The Lord initiated the Dry Act here. We are not altogether dry here, however. It does rain once in a while, but never twice. We had a big rain in February. That was in the year 1904 or 1905, if I remember rightly.

The frog was not born here. Neither was I. I found the egg up in the Owens River Valley, near Little Lake, California, in a Slough back of Bill Bramlette's

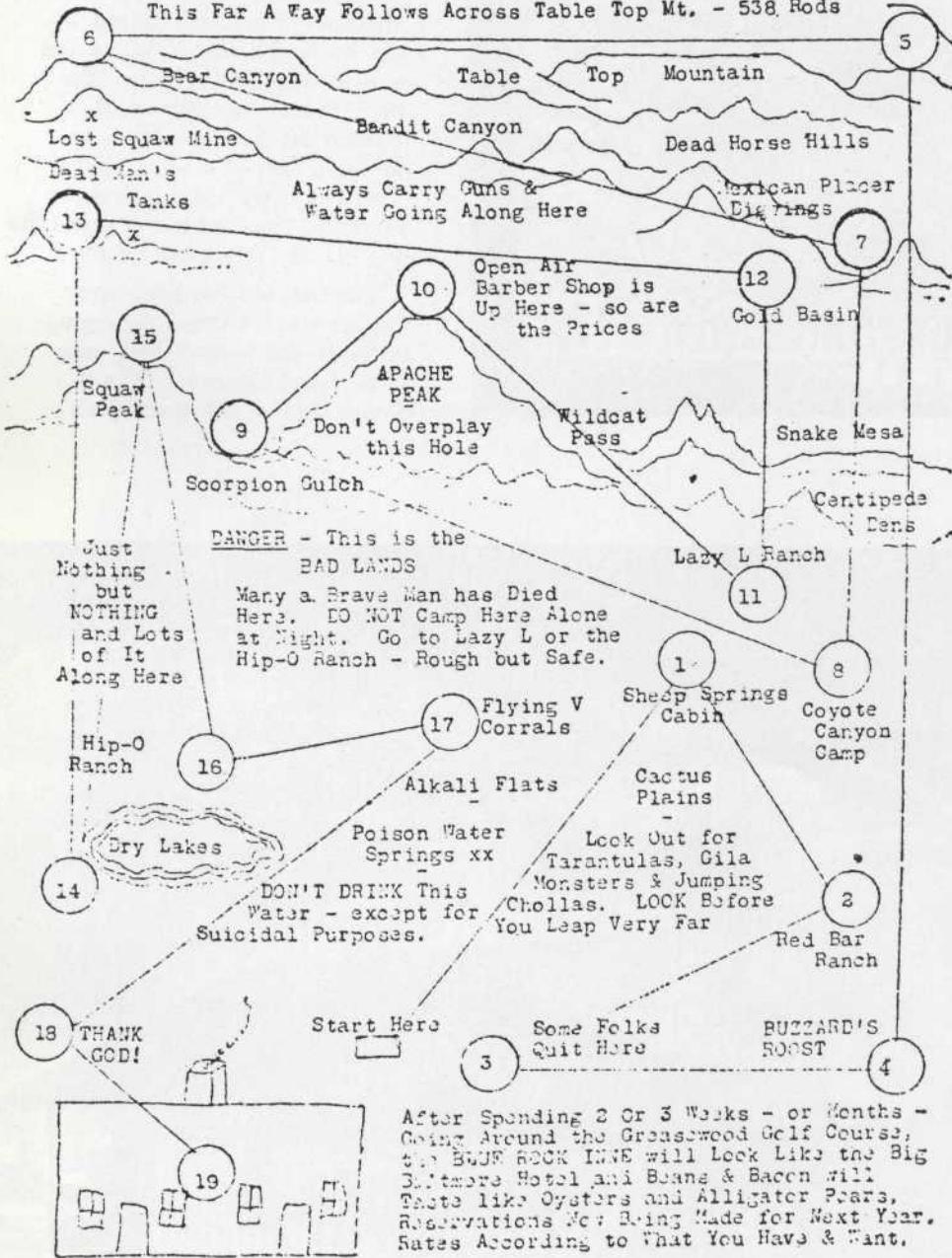


Blue Rock Inn—early 1900's

## THE BLUE ROCK INNE'S FAMOUS GREASEWOOD GOLF COURSE.

Located in Northwest Yumaresque County, At and Around SALOME, ARIZ., "Where She Danced" the Original Red Hot Mama Bear Foot Bare Trot - the 1 that Made John the Baptist Lose His Head. The Golf Course is a Little over 23 Miles Around and Folks who have Played it say Nobody Never Saw Nothing Like it Nowhere Before. NO ARTIFICIAL HAZARDS ANY WHERE ON THE COURSE - as there are Plenty of Natural Ones. Folks come from All Over the World to Spend the Season Playing Around it Just Once - and Some Aint Got Around it Yet. Scores running Over 1,000 are Common, also Birdies of Various Kinds, Eagles, Coyotes & Jack Rabbits - but Rabbit, Badger and Coyote Holes DON'T COUNT. Good Guides, Caddies & Horses, Canteens, Tents & Camping Outfits Leased by the Week, Month or Year, PROVIDED a Substantial Deposit is Made and ALL CADDIES & HORSES LOST ON THE COURSE MUST BE PAID FOR. A Travelling Barber Shop on the Course Makes the Rounds Each Month. Tourists Always Welcome

This Far A Way Follows Across Table Top Mt. - 538 Rods



place seven years ago, I thought it was a wild duck egg, but on the way home it hatched out a frog. I raised him on a bottle, Shasta and Pluto water mostly, and that is why he is such a lively and healthy frog.

The Salome frog is 7 years old now and even though he can't swim yet, it isn't his fault. He never had a chance but he lives in hopes. Three years ago, fourth of July, Palo Verde Pete shot off a box of dynamite and the frog, thinking it was thunder, chased the cloud of smoke two miles down the road, thinking it might rain. He is older and wiser now and getting like the rest of the natives. He just sits and thinks. Sometimes I wonder just what he thinks. He probably thinks he is having a hell of a time. MORAL—Even a frog's tale can have a moral. If the world looks blue and your luck is bad and you think you are having a hell of a time—why just stop and think of my frog—seven years old and he can't swim."

In case you might wonder about the origin of the name of the town, Salome, that was another subject that Dick liked to joke about and tell strangers tales about. The truth is that he named it after Mrs. Grace Salome Pratt, the wife of a mining partner of his, Carl Pratt of Pittsburgh. Grace Valley was also named after her.

Dick Wick Hall did more than just make people smile. He made them forget the many bumps and ruts in the dirt highway that ran past the Laffing Gas Station. He also carried on a running battle with Yuma, the State Highway Commission, and other officials of the county to get better roads. His methods were novel and sometimes incendiary. In addition to the SALOME SUN, he once had printed and distributed red lettered hand bills that said: "DANGER! Don't go by Yuma. Tourists are warned not to attempt to go to Los Angeles by way of Yuma—

## Layout—Greasewood Golf Course

100 miles out of the way and through terrible sand dunes that drift like snow, where planks, brush and boards are used for miles to keep cars from being buried. Go by Blythe, the shortest and best route. . ." Needless to say, the battle raged between the politicians in Yuma and the humorist in Salome. Even the YUMA SUN AND THE SALOME SUN exchanged unpleasantries. (Editors note: today Salome is in La Paz County)

Another of Dick Wick's more famous classics is the fictional Greasewood Golf Course. It spoofs the game of gold while kidding the city dweller and their exaggerated fears of the desert. It boasts a 23 mile course laid out over some of the hottest, roughest acres in Arizona, and he gravely warns players

against the natural hazards of poison waterholes, bandits, crouching tarantulas and Gila Monsters---and even jumping cactus.

Dick Wick Hall passed away on April 28, 1926 while on a trip to Los Angeles. Thus Arizona lost one of her best humorists---and philosophers. One of his more serious stories is about the town in which he lived. It tells a lot about the man and is as follows: "When people say what a place to live, I feel sorry for them because I am finding something for which they are still seeking. So many say they would rather die than have to live in a little town like Salome, where everybody knows everybody else, because it is so lonesome here. They

would rather live in Los Angeles or New York or Pittsburgh where they can live seven years in one place and never know their neighbors and have to ride seven miles on a street car to find someone they know to say hello to. Civilization is getting so complicated now days that hardly nobody raises any cabbages and green onions in their back yard no more. I would rather live out here, lying on the soft side of a big granite rock, soaking up sunshine and satisfaction away from the worries of the outside world where so many folks work so hard getting nowhere. I can get to the same place out here so much easier without working so hard."

*Where Dick Wick Hall is buried*

*In Hopi dress*



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## *Just Between You and Me*

BY: D.W. GRANTHAM

First, a note to all our loyal subscribers and in particular to the librarians among us--This issue, January--February 1985 is Volume 49, Number 1. There is no Volume 48, Number 6 as this issue was delayed by the Christmas holidays and we decided to incorporate parts of it into this issue. All subscription expiration dates have been revised to account for this change. At present, DESERT MAGAZINE will be mailed in the odd numbered months. In this way, you should receive your copies earlier and there will be no long delay during the Christmas season.

\*\*\*\*\*

On page two of this issue is a preview of coming attractions. We have lined up some very interesting and unique articles. The list is not complete--there are many more subjects we will be covering, but could not list them due to the limited amount of space on a page. The upcoming articles on Arizona Ghost Towns and the Gold Park, California article promise to be excellent. As always, DESERT MAGAZINE will accept articles from its readers and any other knowledgeable party who cares to submit one. The rules are on the bottom of page 3.

\*\*\*\*\*

Starting in the next issue will be the return of one of the favorite columns of many readers--letters to the editor. Do you have a question?? Or a comment?? Or maybe you would like to discuss a subject. Drop us a line. A self-addressed stamped envelope will be required for a reply.

\*\*\*\*\*

We have received a lot of mail recently with many letters asking the same question--Is DESERT MAGAZINE in print. Obviously the answer is yes, yet many of our former readers do not know about us. If you happen to know anyone who is a desert lover, please let them know about Desert. For 1985, we would like to have a healthy increase in subscribers. We are at a point now where more subscribers will enable us to increase the frequency of publication with no increase in cost. Simply put, that means the more subscribers we get, the more issues you get.

\*\*\*\*\*

Am wondering what the weather will be like for the next few months. Here on the desert, we have had a lot of rain, and yes, even some snow. If the rainfall keeps up, then this could be a good year for the wildflowers. Will let you know how this progresses. There has been so much development in the Coachella Valley that there will be little area left for the Sand Verbena and the Primrose. I wonder if the Federal Government has such a thing as an endangered flower? I am afraid that we will have to look to the foothills of San Diego, Northern Los Angeles, and Kern County for Wildflowers in the future. And of course, selected parts of the Desert such as Joshua Tree National Monument and Anza Borrego.

\*\*\*\*\*

